

THE FLORIDA SENATE

Tallahassee, Florida 32399-1100

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Community Affairs
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JOINT COMMITTEE:
Joint Legislative Auditing Committee,
Alternating Chair

SENATOR DENNIS BAXLEY

12th District

Senators,

Over the last few weeks, I have appreciated the opportunity to discuss the status of Florida's need and merit-based student financial aid programs with you, constituents and families across the state, and other stakeholders within Florida's #1 ranked higher education system.

The common thread of these discussions has been the shared desire for all of our students to succeed in meaningful careers that provide for their families and serve our communities. I believe we should encourage all students to pursue their passions, but the fact remain that higher education comes at a significant cost to both students and taxpayers and there needs to be at least some element of career planning involved.

My goal in filing Senate Bill 86 was to begin the discussion about both the cost and the value of the degrees and programs within our higher education system. Based on your feedback, and with that goal in mind, I have filed an amendment that represents a concrete step forward in this discussion, while at the same time preserving the merit-based financial aid benefits our students earned in high school, regardless of which undergraduate path the student chooses.

A brief summary of the strike-all amendment I filed today is below:

The strike all amendment *removes* from the bill:

- The reduction of a Bright Futures or Benacquisto Scholarship award amount tied to student enrollment in a certificate or degree program on a list created by the BOG, SBE, or ICUF.
- The reduction in the total number of credits in a Bright Futures award by the number of acceleration credits applied.
- The provision relating to graduate study for Bright Futures award recipients tied to the certificate and degree list, which simply retains current law relating to graduate study.

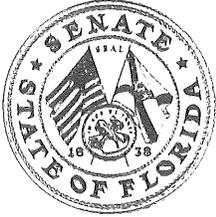
REPLY TO:

- ☐ 206 South Hwy 27/441, Lady Lake, Florida 32159 (352) 750-3133
- ☐ 315 SE 25th Avenue, Ocala, Florida 34471 (352) 789-6720
- ☐ 322 Senate Building, 404 South Monroe Street, Tallahassee, Florida 32399-1100 (850) 487-5012

Senate's Website: www.flsenate.gov

WILTON SIMPSON
President of the Senate

AARON BEAN
President Pro Tempore



The strike-all amendment *adds*:

- A requirement that, as a part of the state university procedures to release a hold on the student's registration after the first year, that the student affirmatively indicate that he or she has received required career information and indicates awareness of future employment and wage prospects based on his or her declared major.

The strike-all amendment *retains* the following provisions from the bill:

- Creation of an online dashboard for university graduate employment and education outcomes, and a requirement that a hold be placed on each student's registration after the first year until the student has met specific conditions.
- Requirement for the BOG, SBE, and ICFU to establish lists of certificate and degree programs that do not directly lead to employment.
- Modification of Bright Futures Florida Academic Scholars (FAS) and the Florida Medallion Scholars (FMS) awards, which:
 - Adds additional alternative eligibility options relating to earning an associate degree through dual enrollment or an AP Capstone Diploma.
 - Changes the FAS and FMS award to as specified in the GAA.
- Modification of the Benacquisto Scholarship Program to limit initial eligibility for non-resident students to the 2021-2022 academic year, and award as specified in the GAA.
- Clarification that fee exemptions related to student in DCF care apply to students aged 18 and under.

We have awakened a giant. We have to reconnect the education and economic model and we have begun that process.

I would appreciate your favorable support of these changes and look forward to discussing the bill and amendment with you further at tomorrow's meeting of the Senate Appropriation Subcommittee on Education.

Onward & Upward,


Senator Dennis Baxley

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