

By Senator Montford

3-00824-15

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1 A bill to be entitled
2 An act relating to the Bright Futures Scholarship
3 Program; amending s. 1009.531, F.S.; providing that
4 the initial award and renewal period for students who
5 are unable to accept an initial award immediately
6 after completion of high school due to a full-time
7 religious or service obligation begins upon the
8 completion of the religious or service obligation;
9 requiring verification from the entity for which the
10 student completed such obligation; providing an
11 effective date.

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13 Be It Enacted by the Legislature of the State of Florida:
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15 Section 1. Paragraph (c) of subsection (2) of section
16 1009.531, Florida Statutes, is amended to read:

17 1009.531 Florida Bright Futures Scholarship Program;
18 student eligibility requirements for initial awards.—

19 (2)

20 (c) A student graduating from high school in the 2012-2013
21 academic year and thereafter is eligible to accept an initial
22 award for 2 years following high school graduation and to accept
23 a renewal award for 5 years following high school graduation. A
24 student who applies for an award by high school graduation and
25 who meets all other eligibility requirements, but who does not
26 accept his or her award, may reapply during subsequent
27 application periods up to 2 years after high school graduation.
28 For a student who enlists in the United States Armed Forces
29 immediately after completion of high school, the 2-year

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30 eligibility period for his or her initial award and the 5-year
31 renewal period shall begin upon the date of separation from
32 active duty. For a student who is receiving a Florida Bright
33 Futures Scholarship award and discontinues his or her education
34 to enlist in the United States Armed Forces, the remainder of
35 his or her 5-year renewal period shall commence upon the date of
36 separation from active duty. For a student who is unable to
37 accept an initial award immediately after completion of high
38 school due to a full-time religious or service obligation
39 lasting at least 18 months, the 2-year eligibility period for
40 his or her initial award and the 5-year renewal period begin
41 upon the completion of his or her religious or service
42 obligation. The full-time religious or service obligation must
43 be documented in writing and verified by the entity for which
44 the student completed such obligation. If a course of study is
45 not completed after 5 academic years, an exception of 1 year to
46 the renewal timeframe may be granted due to a verifiable illness
47 or other documented emergency pursuant to s. 1009.40(1)(b)4.

48 Section 2. This act shall take effect July 1, 2015.