

By Senator Jones

35-00584-21

2021888__

1 A bill to be entitled
2 An act relating to the Sunshine Scholarship Program;
3 creating s. 1009.895, F.S.; establishing the Sunshine
4 Scholarship Program for specified purposes; requiring
5 the Department of Education to administer the program;
6 defining terms; requiring certain financial aid to be
7 credited to a student's tuition and fees before award
8 of a Sunshine Scholarship; providing student
9 eligibility requirements; requiring a student who
10 receives a program scholarship and completes his or
11 her program of study or disenrolls from an eligible
12 postsecondary institution to reside and work within
13 this state for a certain period of time unless a
14 specified exception applies; requiring a student to
15 repay the scholarship amount under certain
16 circumstances; limiting the program's application to a
17 student's tuition and fees; providing for funding;
18 requiring the State Board of Education to adopt rules;
19 providing an effective date.

20
21 Be It Enacted by the Legislature of the State of Florida:

22
23 Section 1. Section 1009.895, Florida Statutes, is created
24 to read:

25 1009.895 Sunshine Scholarship Program.—

26 (1) There is established the Sunshine Scholarship Program
27 to be administered by the Department of Education. The Sunshine
28 Scholarship Program shall provide funding for 100 percent of
29 tuition and fees for Florida residents pursuing an associate

35-00584-21

2021888

30 degree or a career certificate from an eligible postsecondary
31 institution. For the purposes of this section, the term
32 "eligible postsecondary institution" means a Florida College
33 System institution, a career center operated by a school
34 district, or a charter technical career center. Financial aid
35 received from the Pell Grant, the Florida Public Student
36 Assistance Grant Program, and the Florida Bright Futures
37 Scholarship Program shall be credited first to the student's
38 tuition and fees before the award of a Sunshine Scholarship.

39 (2) To be eligible to receive a Sunshine Scholarship
40 pursuant to this section, a student must:

41 (a) Be a resident for tuition purposes, as defined in s.
42 1009.21.

43 (b) Meet the general requirements for student eligibility
44 as provided in s. 1009.40, except as otherwise provided in this
45 section.

46 (c) Have a total annual household income equal to or less
47 than \$50,000.

48 (d) Complete the Free Application for Federal Student Aid
49 for each academic year in which the Sunshine Scholarship is
50 sought.

51 (e) Be accepted by and enroll in an eligible postsecondary
52 institution.

53 (f) Maintain continuous enrollment as a full-time student
54 while receiving the scholarship. "Full-time student" means a
55 student enrolled in a minimum of 12 semester hours or the clock
56 hour equivalent.

57 (3) Upon completion of his or her program of study or upon
58 disenrollment from an eligible postsecondary institution, the

35-00584-21

2021888__

59 student must reside and work within this state for the same
60 period of time he or she received funds from the program. If the
61 student does not reside and work within this state for the
62 specified period, he or she must repay the total amount awarded,
63 plus an annual interest rate equal to the federal student loan
64 interest rate in effect when the student entered the program.
65 The requirements of this subsection do not apply:

66 (a) When a student enlists in the United States Armed
67 Forces; or

68 (b) While a student is continuously enrolled in a
69 baccalaureate degree program or higher at a Florida
70 postsecondary institution. Once the student graduates or
71 disenrolls from a Florida postsecondary institution, the
72 requirements of this subsection apply.

73 (4) To remain eligible for the program, a student must
74 maintain the equivalent of a cumulative grade point average of
75 2.5 on a 4.0 scale while enrolled at an eligible postsecondary
76 institution.

77 (5) The Sunshine Scholarship Program applies only to
78 tuition and fees. Each student is responsible for additional
79 user fees, textbooks, and other college-related expenses.

80 (6) Funding for the program shall be as provided in the
81 General Appropriations Act.

82 (7) The State Board of Education shall adopt rules to
83 administer this section.

84 Section 2. This act shall take effect July 1, 2021.