

SENATE BILL 1918

By Yarbro

AN ACT to amend Tennessee Code Annotated, Title 49,
relative to the Tennessee second chance
scholarship program.

BE IT ENACTED BY THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF THE STATE OF TENNESSEE:

SECTION 1. Tennessee Code Annotated, Title 49, Chapter 4, Part 7, is amended by
adding the following as a new section:

(a)

(1) The general assembly finds and declares that youth who have been placed in the custody of the department of children's services face many obstacles upon the youth's release from such custody, including homelessness, poverty, addiction, unemployment, and issues reenrolling in school. Financially investing in the educational success of youth who have been placed in the custody of the department of children's services has proven to have significant positive impacts on reducing recidivism.

(2) The general assembly further declares that the Tennessee second chance scholarship program created in this section is intended to award scholarships to youth who have been placed in the custody of the department of children's services to assist such youth in the pursuit of a postsecondary credential and gainful employment.

(b) The Tennessee second chance scholarship program, referred to in this section as the "scholarship program," is created, subject to appropriation by the general assembly, to award scholarships to assist persons who have been placed in the custody of the department of children's services in the pursuit of a postsecondary degree or

credential. The Tennessee higher education commission shall administer the scholarship program.

(c) The executive director of the Tennessee higher education commission, or the executive director's designee, shall appoint a program coordinator who shall counsel and support scholarship recipients by regularly meeting with recipients to establish the recipient's educational and employment goals, and to connect recipients with wraparound services.

(d)

(1) There is created the Tennessee second chance scholarship advisory board, referred to in this section as the "advisory board," which consists of the following five (5) members:

(A) The commissioner of children's services, or the commissioner's designee;

(B) The executive director of the Tennessee higher education commission, or the executive director's designee;

(C) The commissioner of human services, or the commissioner's designee;

(D) The program coordinator of the Tennessee second chance scholarship program; and

(E) A public member who has been placed in the custody of the department of children's services, to be appointed by the commissioner of children's services.

(2) The advisory board shall hold the advisory board's first meeting by November 1, 2020, at the time and place designated by the executive director of the Tennessee higher education commission, or the executive director's designee. The advisory board must meet at least four (4) times each year and shall promulgate rules to establish the procedures by which a person may apply for a Tennessee second chance scholarship. At a minimum, the advisory board's

rules must specify the information that a person must submit with the person's application, and the deadlines for submitting an application.

(3) The advisory board shall award scholarships in amounts up to ten thousand dollars (\$10,000) to applicants based on the following criteria:

(A) The applicant's prior placement in the custody of the department of children's services;

(B) The applicant's demonstrated degree of financial need, based on the resources available to the applicant;

(C) The applicant's acceptance to an institution that offers postsecondary degrees or credentials, including, but not limited to, colleges of applied technology, community colleges, certificate programs, or other institutions of higher education; and

(D) Any other criteria outlined in the rules promulgated by the advisory board to identify persons in the greatest need of assistance in the pursuit of a postsecondary degree or credential.

(4) The advisory board shall determine the amount of each scholarship awarded based on the applicant's degree of financial need, the applicant's cost of attendance, the funding appropriated to, and made available for, the awarding of second chance scholarships by the general assembly for the applicable fiscal year, and the anticipated number of persons who may apply to the scholarship program during the applicable fiscal year.

(5) The advisory board's rules must be promulgated in accordance with the Uniform Administrative Procedures Act, compiled in title 4, chapter 5.

(e) The Tennessee higher education commission shall annually report on the scholarship program to the general assembly as part of the commission's annual report

to the governor and the general assembly on the condition of Tennessee higher education under § 49-7-210.

(f) Subject to appropriation by the general assembly, the scholarship program shall not award more than twenty-five thousand dollars (\$25,000) in scholarships for the 2020-2021 fiscal year.

(g) This section is repealed on July 1, 2023.

SECTION 2. This act shall take effect upon becoming a law, the public welfare requiring it.