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H.B. 129
134th General Assembly

Bill Analysis

Version: As Introduced

Primary Sponsors: Reps. Hoops and Sobecki

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SUMMARY

- Establishes the Commercial Truck Driver Student Aid Program to provide a combination of a grant and a loan to eligible students enrolled in certified commercial truck driver's license schools.
- Requires each participating student to commit to residing and being employed in Ohio for a minimum of one year upon completion of a certified commercial driver's license program.
- Makes an appropriation.

DETAILED ANALYSIS

Commercial Truck Driver Student Aid Program

The bill establishes the Commercial Truck Driver Student Aid Program under which the Chancellor of Higher Education awards a qualified student a combination of a grant and a loan to pay for the costs of a certified commercial driver's license program. In addition to meeting certain eligibility criteria, to receive an award a student must commit to residing and being employed in Ohio for a minimum of one year upon completion of a certified commercial driver's license program.¹ Specifically, the bill requires the student to commit to being either self-employed as a truck driver using a valid Ohio mailing address or employed as a truck driver by an entity that has a valid Ohio mailing address.²

¹ R.C. 3333.125(B).

² R.C. 3333.125(A)(4).

Eligibility

To be eligible for an award under the program, an individual must satisfy all of the following requirements:

1. Be an Ohio resident;
2. Be enrolled in a certified commercial driver's license school;
3. Pass a drug test;
4. Have three or fewer moving violations in two consecutive years; and
5. Not have not plead guilty to or been convicted of operating a motor vehicle under the influence of alcohol or a drug of abuse
6. Meet any additional eligibility criteria established by the Chancellor.³

If an individual is eligible for the program but then either has more than three moving violations in two consecutive years or pleads guilty to or is convicted of operating a motor vehicle under the influence, the individual loses eligibility.⁴

The Chancellor must adopt rules establishing requirements for certification for a commercial driver's license school in which an eligible student must be enrolled to participate in the program. The Chancellor may not certify a commercial driver's license school that charges employers recruiting fees. The bill also specifies that a certified driver's license program offered by a for-profit career college or school ("proprietary school") already certified by the State Board of Career Colleges and Schools is considered a certified commercial driver's license school.⁵

Amount of awards to students

An award under the Commercial Truck Driver Student Aid Program consists of two parts. The first part is a grant that is equal to one-half of the remaining state cost of attendance after the student's federal Pell grant and EFC are applied to instructional and general charges for the student's enrollment in a certified commercial driver's license school. The second part is a loan in an amount equal to the grant.⁶ The bill requires the Chancellor to adopt rules establishing the terms and conditions for loans under the program.⁷

The bill specifies that the amount of a grant and a loan awarded under the program is in addition to what the student may receive under the Ohio College Opportunity Grant (OCOG).

³ R.C. 3333.125(A) and (G)(3).

⁴ R.C. 3333.125(A).

⁵ R.C. 3333.125(A)(2) and (G)(2).

⁶ R.C. 3333.125(D).

⁷ R.C. 3333.125(G)(1) and (3).

However, the bill directs the Chancellor to decrease the loan amount by the amount the student receives under OCOG.⁸

The bill also specifies that, if the amount appropriated to support the program is inadequate to provide grants and loans to all eligible students who apply, the Chancellor must proportionately reduce the amount of each award (grant and loan) for that academic year.⁹

Promissory note

Each student who accepts a grant under the program is required to sign a promissory note payable to the state in the event that the student either fails to complete the certified commercial driver's license program in which the student enrolled or fails to meet the one-year requirement to reside and be employed in Ohio upon completing that program.¹⁰

The amount payable under the note must be the amount of the grant accepted by the student plus interest accrued annually beginning one calendar year after the student completes, does not complete, or disenrolls from, the certified commercial driver's license program in which the student had enrolled. The Chancellor must determine the interest rate and period of repayment under the note.¹¹

A note must stipulate, however, that the obligation to make payments under the note is cancelled if the student meets the one-year requirement to reside and be employed in Ohio upon completing a certified commercial driver's license program. Additionally, the note must stipulate that the obligation to make payments is also cancelled if the student dies or becomes totally and permanently disabled.¹²

Commercial Truck Driver Student Aid Fund

The bill establishes the Commercial Truck Driver Student Aid Fund in the state treasury to be used by the Chancellor to make grants and loans under the bill and for administrative expenses.¹³

Appropriation

The bill appropriates \$5.0 million in each of FYs 2022 and 2023 to support grants and loans under the Commercial Truck Driver Student Aid Program. It also earmarks, separately, up to \$2.5 million in each fiscal year to be distributed by the Chancellor as grants and loans.¹⁴

⁸ R.C. 3333.125(E).

⁹ R.C. 3333.125(D)(2).

¹⁰ R.C. 3333.125(F)(1).

¹¹ R.C. 3333.125(F)(2).

¹² R.C. 3333.125(F)(3).

¹³ R.C. 3333.125(C).

¹⁴ Sections 381.10 and 381.340 of H.B. 166 of the 132nd General Assembly, amended in Sections 3 and 4 of the bill.

HISTORY

Action	Date
Introduced	02-17-21
