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H.B. 27
135th General Assembly

Bill Analysis

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Version: As Passed by the Senate

Primary Sponsors: Reps. Mathews and J. Thomas

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SUMMARY

- Requires state universities and community colleges to provide a financial cost and aid disclosure form to newly admitted students.
- Modifies the Ohio Adoption Grant Program application process.
- Increases from \$15 million to \$34 million GRF appropriations for the Adoption Grant Program in both FY 2024 and FY 2025, and reappropriates for FY 2025 any unexpended, unencumbered balance of the FY 2024 appropriation.
- Makes capital appropriations and reappropriations for the FY 2025-FY 2026 biennium to the following agencies:
 - Ohio Exposition Commission, for Expo 2025 projects (\$196 million);
 - Ohio Facilities Construction Commission, for the School Building Assistance Program (\$600 million);
 - Public Works Commission, for local public infrastructure, the State Capital Improvements Revolving Loan Fund, and the Clean Ohio Conservation Program (\$575 million).

DETAILED ANALYSIS

Financial cost and aid disclosure form

The bill requires state universities and community colleges to provide qualifying students with a financial cost and aid disclosure form. The requirements in the bill begin one year after the bill's effective date.¹

¹ R.C. 3345.026(B) and (D).

Form distribution requirement

The bill requires state universities² to provide a financial cost and aid disclosure form to qualifying students as part of the student's initial financial aid packet.³ Community colleges⁴ are required to provide a financial cost and aid disclosure form to qualifying students with the student's financial aid award letter.⁵ A "qualifying student" under the bill is a newly admitted full-time student who is seeking a degree.⁶ The form distributed by state universities must be provided to students prior to the institution's student admission decision deadline.⁷ State universities and community colleges may provide the form to students electronically.⁸

Form requirements

State universities

The bill requires the financial cost and aid disclosure forms distributed by state universities to include all of the following information:⁹

1. Costs associated with attendance, including:
 - a. General and instructional fees;
 - b. Room and board, or a reasonable estimate if the qualifying student has not selected a room and board plan;
 - c. Special fees that the state university charges at the time the form is created;
2. The qualifying student's aggregate cost of attendance, including instruction, general, and special fees and room and board;
3. All available sources of financial aid offered by the state university for which the qualify student is eligible, including:
 - a. Grants and scholarships the state university is aware of and that it offers, including a description of any requirements for maintaining eligibility;
 - b. Federal student loans, including federal direct subsidized and unsubsidized student loans;
 - c. Work study programs, including a description of any requirements for maintaining eligibility;

² "State universities" include public institutions of higher education that are a body politic and corporate.

³ R.C. 3345.026(B).

⁴ "Community colleges" include community colleges, technical colleges, and state community colleges.

⁵ R.C. 3345.026(D).

⁶ R.C. 3345.026(A)(1).

⁷ R.C. 3345.026(B).

⁸ R.C. 3345.026(B) and (D).

⁹ R.C. 3345.026(C).

4. The qualifying student's expected net cost of attendance after aggregating financial aid and applying to the student's aggregate cost of attendance;
5. The qualifying student's expected monthly education loan payment upon graduation based on federal student loans;
6. The income range between the 25th and 75th percentiles for the following:
 - a. The state university's most recent cohort of graduates;
 - b. The state university's cohort of graduates who graduated five years prior to the qualifying student's admission;
 - c. If the qualifying student has declared a major or enrolled in a particular school at the state university, income ranges for graduates who had that major or were enrolled in that school.

The form is limited to one double-sided page in length when printed.¹⁰

Community colleges

The bill requires financial cost and aid disclosure forms provided by community colleges to include all of the same information required for state universities above, except for the income ranges described in the sixth item of the above list. Instead, community colleges must provide qualifying students a link to a page on the college's website containing information on those income ranges with the student's acceptance letter.

Additionally, the bill clarifies that the requirements of the bill may not be construed to prohibit community colleges from providing financial counseling, including advising students on expected monthly loan payments for the total loan amounts a student may borrow.

As with state universities, the forms provided by community colleges may not exceed one double-sided page in length when printed.¹¹

Form template

The bill requires the Chancellor of Higher Education to develop a financial cost and aid disclosure form template or approve an existing alternative that addresses the above requirements. The Chancellor must develop or approve the template in consultation with the United States Department of Education and financial aid directors from state institutions of higher education to ensure alignment with the U.S. Department of Education's College Financing Plan and other federal financing tools.¹² State universities and community colleges are required to base their forms on the template developed by the Chancellor.¹³

¹⁰ R.C. 3345.026(B).

¹¹ R.C. 3345.026(D).

¹² R.C. 3345.026(E).

¹³ R.C. 3345.026(B) and (D).

Adoption Grant Program

The bill makes various changes to the Ohio Adoption Grant Program application process. In order to receive a grant payment, the bill adds the eligibility requirement that the adoptive parent be an Ohio resident at the time the adoption was finalized. Continuing law requires the following:

- The adoptive parent has not previously received a grant payment from the program for the adopted child.
- The adoptive parent does not also currently claim an adoption tax credit for the adopted child.
- The adoptive parent applies for the grant no later than one year after the adoption is finalized.
- The adoption is not a step-parent adoption.
- The adoption is finalized on or after January 1, 2023.¹⁴

The bill clarifies that any court or legal documents that may be required by the Department of Job and Family Services (ODJFS) Director to prove an adoption must be certified copies. It also requires any court, in addition to any department, agency, or state division in continuing law, to provide any document related to the adoption.¹⁵

Additionally, under the bill, any document provided to ODJFS remains confidential if it was confidential under any state or federal law before being provided to ODJFS.¹⁶

Finally, the bill increases from \$15 million to \$34 million GRF appropriations for the Adoption Grant Program in both FY 2024 and FY 2025, and reappropriates for FY 2025 any unexpended, unencumbered balance of the FY 2024 appropriation.¹⁷

Capital appropriations

The bill makes capital appropriations for the FY 2025-FY 2026 biennium to the following agencies:

- Ohio Exposition Commission, for Expo 2025 projects (\$196 million);
- Ohio Facilities Construction Commission, for the School Building Assistance Program (\$600 million);

¹⁴ R.C. 5101.192(A).

¹⁵ R.C. 5101.193(C).

¹⁶ R.C. 5101.194.

¹⁷ Sections 29 and 30.

- Public Works Commission, for local public infrastructure, the State Capital Improvements Revolving Loan Fund, and the Clean Ohio Conservation Program (\$575 million).

The bill also reappropriates, for the same purposes, all capital appropriations or reappropriations an agency has available at the end of FY 2024 for the FY 2025-FY 2026 biennium.¹⁸

HISTORY

Action	Date
Introduced	02-15-23
Reported, H. Higher Education	05-08-23
Passed House (88-1)	05-24-23
Reported, S. Workforce and Higher Education	02-28-24
Passed Senate (30-2)	02-28-24

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¹⁸ Sections 6 to 28.