

Fiscal Note

BILL # HB 2420

TITLE: law enforcement; families; tuition scholarships

SPONSOR: Gress

STATUS: As Introduced

PREPARED BY: Cameron Mortensen

Description

The bill would appropriate \$10,000,000 from the General Fund in FY 2024 to provide scholarships to spouses and dependents of law enforcement officers who are enrolled in a public university, community college district, career and technical education district, or private postsecondary institution.

Estimated Impact

The bill would cost \$10,000,000 from the General Fund in FY 2024. Due to the first-come first-serve nature of these scholarships, the FY 2024 costs could not exceed \$10,000,000.

Analysis

The bill would establish the Spouses and Dependents of Law Enforcement Officers Tuition Scholarship Fund and require the Arizona Board of Regents (ABOR) to award scholarships covering the remaining cost of tuition and mandatory fees after all other financial aid received by eligible students. The bill requires awards to be distributed on a first-come first-serve basis.

Based on 2020 U.S. Census Bureau data, there are currently 12,740 law enforcement officers in Arizona. To provide an estimate of the population of eligible students, we utilized additional data from the U.S. Census Bureau, National Center for Education Statistics, and Pew Research Center to make the following assumptions:

- 50% of law enforcement officers are married
- 32% of spouses already have a bachelor's degree
- 25% of individuals aged 25 and older attend higher education institutions
- 3% of law enforcement officers have children between the ages of 19 and 22
- 40% of traditionally college-aged students enroll in higher education

This results in an estimate of approximately 1,203 spouses and dependents who would apply for this program.

The bill would provide scholarships at any Arizona public university, community college, career technical education district (CTED) program, or licensed private postsecondary educational institution. Based on the current distribution of full-time student equivalent enrollment in the Arizona public higher education system, we prorated the number of participants between the public universities and community colleges. For university students, we assumed an average out-of-pocket cost of \$6,464 after federal financial aid received. We estimate federal financial aid grants for most qualifying individuals attending a community college would be sufficient to cover tuition costs and any additional scholarships costs would be minimal. This methodology could generate a possible demand of \$4.9 million on the fund.

We do not have access to accurate data to estimate the number of individuals who would attend a CTED program or private postsecondary institution and what the average cost of those students would be. If those students increased

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costs above the estimated \$4.9 million for public university students, the bill would limit total scholarship expenditures to \$10 million.

Local Government Impact

None

2/2/23