



General Assembly

February Session, 2022

Raised Bill No. 5135

LCO No. 1127



Referred to Committee on HIGHER EDUCATION AND
EMPLOYMENT ADVANCEMENT

Introduced by:
(HED)

**AN ACT EXPANDING THE ROBERTA B. WILLIS SCHOLARSHIP
PROGRAM TO STUDENTS OF PRIVATE OCCUPATIONAL SCHOOLS.**

Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives in General
Assembly convened:

1 Section 1. Section 10a-173 of the 2022 supplement to the general
2 statutes is repealed and the following is substituted in lieu thereof
3 (*Effective October 1, 2022*):

4 (a) For the purposes of this section:

5 (1) "Family contribution" means the expected family contribution for
6 educational costs as computed from the student's Free Application for
7 Federal Student Aid;

8 (2) "Full-time or part-time undergraduate student" means a student
9 who is enrolled at an institution of higher education in a course of study
10 leading to such student's first associate or bachelor's degree and who is
11 carrying, for a full-time student, twelve or more semester credit hours,
12 or, for a part-time student, between six and eleven semester credit hours
13 at such institution of higher education;

14 (3) "Independent institution of higher education" means a nonprofit
15 institution established in this state (A) that has degree-granting
16 authority in this state; (B) that has its main campus located in this state;
17 (C) that is not included in the Connecticut system of public higher
18 education; and (D) whose primary function is not the preparation of
19 students for religious vocation;

20 (4) "Public institution of higher education" means the constituent
21 units of the state system of higher education identified in subdivisions
22 (1) and (2) of section 10a-1;

23 (5) "Private occupational school" has the same meaning as provided
24 in section 10a-22a; and

25 [(5)] (6) "Eligible educational costs" means the tuition and required
26 fees for an individual student that are published by each institution of
27 higher education and private occupational school participating in the
28 grant program established under this section, plus a fixed amount for
29 required books and educational supplies as determined by the Office of
30 Higher Education.

31 (b) The state, acting through the Office of Higher Education, shall
32 establish the Governor's Scholarship program to annually make need-
33 based financial aid available for eligible educational costs for
34 Connecticut residents (1) enrolled at Connecticut's public and
35 independent institutions of higher education as full-time or part-time
36 undergraduate students beginning with new or transfer students in the
37 fiscal year ending June 30, 2014, and (2) enrolled at Connecticut's private
38 occupational schools beginning with new or transfer students in the
39 fiscal year ending June 30, 2023. On and after July 1, 2016, said program
40 shall be known as the "Roberta B. Willis Scholarship program". Any
41 award made to a student in the fiscal year ending June 30, 2013, under
42 the capitol scholarship grant program, established under section 10a-
43 169 of the general statutes, revision of 1958, revised to January 1, 2013,
44 the Connecticut aid to public college students grant program,
45 established under section 10a-164a of the general statutes, revision of
46 1958, revised to January 1, 2013, Connecticut aid to Charter Oak,

47 established under subsection (c) of section 10a-164a of the general
48 statutes, revision of 1958, revised to January 1, 2013, or the Connecticut
49 independent college student grant program, established under section
50 10a-36 of the general statutes, revision of 1958, revised to January 1,
51 2013, shall be offered under the Roberta B. Willis Scholarship program
52 and be renewable for the life of the original award, provided such
53 student meets and continues to meet the need and academic standards
54 established for purposes of the program under which such student
55 received the original award.

56 (c) Within available appropriations, the Roberta B. Willis Scholarship
57 program shall include a need and merit-based grant, a need-based grant
58 and a Charter Oak grant. The need and merit-based grant shall be
59 funded at not less than twenty per cent but not more than thirty per cent
60 of available appropriations. The need-based grant shall be funded at up
61 to eighty per cent of available appropriations. The Charter Oak grant
62 shall be not less than one hundred thousand dollars of available
63 appropriations. There shall be an administrative allowance based on
64 one-quarter of one per cent of the available appropriations, but (1) for
65 the fiscal year ending June 30, 2022, not less than three hundred fifty
66 thousand dollars, and (2) for the fiscal year ending June 30, 2023, and
67 each fiscal year thereafter, not less than one hundred thousand dollars.
68 In addition to the amount of the annual appropriation allocated to the
69 regional community-technical colleges under subsection (e) of this
70 section, and to regional community-technical college students under
71 subsection (d) of this section, not less than two and one-half per cent of
72 the annual appropriation shall be allocated to the regional community-
73 technical colleges to be used for financial aid purposes.

74 (d) The Roberta B. Willis Scholarship need and merit-based grant
75 shall be available to any Connecticut resident who is a full-time or part-
76 time undergraduate student at any public or independent institution of
77 higher education or who is a student at a private occupational school.
78 The Office of Higher Education shall determine eligibility by financial
79 need based on family contribution and eligibility by merit based on
80 either previous high school academic achievement or performance on

81 standardized academic aptitude tests. The Office of Higher Education
82 shall make awards according to a sliding scale, annually determined by
83 said office, up to a maximum family contribution and based on available
84 appropriations and eligible students. The Roberta B. Willis Scholarship
85 need and merit-based grant shall be awarded in a higher amount than
86 the need-based grant awarded pursuant to subsection (e) of this section.
87 Recipients of the need and merit-based grant shall not be eligible to
88 receive an additional need-based award. The order of institutions of
89 higher education and private occupational schools provided by a
90 student on the student's Free Application for Federal Student Aid shall
91 not affect the student's eligibility for an award under this subsection.
92 The accepting institution of higher education and private occupational
93 school shall disburse sums awarded under the need and merit-based
94 grant for payment of the student's eligible educational costs.

95 (e) The Roberta B. Willis Scholarship need-based grant shall be
96 available to any Connecticut resident who is a full-time or part-time
97 undergraduate student at any public or independent institution of
98 higher education or who is a student at a private occupational school.
99 The amount of the annual appropriation to be allocated to each
100 institution of higher education shall be determined by its actual full-
101 time equivalent enrollment of undergraduate students who are
102 Connecticut residents with a family contribution during the fall
103 semester of the fiscal year two years prior to the grant year of an amount
104 not greater than two hundred per cent of the maximum family
105 contribution eligible for a federal Pell grant award for the academic year
106 one year prior to the grant year. Not later than July first, annually, each
107 institution of higher education shall report such enrollment data to the
108 Office of Higher Education. Not later than October first, annually, the
109 Office of Higher Education shall (1) publish such enrollment data on its
110 Internet web site, and (2) notify each institution of higher education of
111 the proportion of the annual appropriation that such institution of
112 higher education will receive the following fiscal year and publish the
113 proportions for each institution of higher education on its Internet web
114 site. Participating institutions of higher education shall make awards
115 (A) to eligible full-time students in an amount up to four thousand five

116 hundred dollars, and (B) to eligible part-time students in an amount that
117 is prorated according to the number of credits each student will earn for
118 completing the course or courses in which such student is enrolled, such
119 that a student enrolled in a course or courses earning (i) at least nine but
120 less than twelve credits is eligible for up to seventy-five per cent of the
121 maximum award, and (ii) at least six but less than nine credits is eligible
122 for up to fifty per cent of the maximum award. The amount of the annual
123 appropriation to be allocated to each private occupational school shall
124 be as determined by the Office of Higher Education. Each participating
125 private occupational school shall make awards to students pursuant to
126 guidelines developed by said office and posted on its Internet web site
127 until such time as regulations are adopted by said office pursuant to the
128 provisions of subdivision (2) of section 10a-161. Each participating
129 institution of higher education and private occupational school shall
130 expend all of the moneys received under the Roberta B. Willis
131 Scholarship program as direct financial assistance only for eligible
132 educational costs.

133 (f) Participating institutions of higher education and private
134 occupational schools shall annually provide the Office of Higher
135 Education with data and reports on all Connecticut students who
136 applied for financial aid, including, but not limited to, students
137 receiving a Roberta B. Willis Scholarship grant, in a form and at a time
138 determined by said office. If an institution of higher education or private
139 occupational school fails to submit information to the Office of Higher
140 Education as directed, such institution or school shall be prohibited
141 from participating in the scholarship program in the fiscal year
142 following the fiscal year in which such institution or school failed to
143 submit such information. Each participating institution of higher
144 education and private occupational school shall maintain, for a period
145 of not less than three years, records substantiating the reported number
146 of Connecticut students and documentation utilized by the institution
147 of higher education and private occupational school in determining
148 eligibility of the student grant recipients. Such records shall be subject
149 to audit or review. Funds not obligated by an institution of higher
150 education or a private occupational school shall be returned by May first

151 in the fiscal year the grant was made to the Office of Higher Education
152 for reallocation. Financial aid provided to Connecticut residents under
153 this program shall be designated as a grant from the Roberta B. Willis
154 Scholarship program.

155 (g) The Roberta B. Willis Scholarship Charter Oak grant shall be
156 available to any full-time or part-time undergraduate student enrolled
157 in Charter Oak State College. The Office of Higher Education shall
158 allocate any appropriation to Charter Oak State College to be used to
159 provide grants for eligible educational costs to residents of this state
160 who demonstrate substantial financial need and who are matriculated
161 in a degree program at Charter Oak State College. Individual awards
162 shall not exceed a student's calculated eligible educational costs.
163 Financial aid provided to Connecticut residents under this program
164 shall be designated as a grant from the Roberta B. Willis Scholarship
165 program.

166 (h) In administering the Roberta B. Willis Scholarship program, the
167 Office of Higher Education shall develop and utilize fiscal procedures
168 designed to ensure accountability of the public funds expended. Such
169 procedures shall include provisions for compliance reviews that shall be
170 conducted by the Office of Higher Education on any institution of
171 higher education and private occupational school that participates in the
172 program. Commencing with the fiscal year ending June 30, 2015, and
173 biennially thereafter, each such institution of higher education shall
174 submit the results of an audit done by an independent certified public
175 accountant for each year of participation in the program. Commencing
176 with the fiscal year ending June 30, 2024, and biennially thereafter, each
177 such private occupational school shall submit the results of an audit
178 done by an independent certified public accountant for each year of
179 participation in the program. Any institution of higher education or
180 private occupational school determined by the Office of Higher
181 Education not to be in substantial compliance with the provisions of the
182 Roberta B. Willis Scholarship program shall be ineligible to receive
183 funds under the program for the fiscal year following the fiscal year in
184 which the institution of higher education or private occupational school

185 was determined not to be in substantial compliance. Funding shall be
186 restored when the Office of Higher Education determines that the
187 institution of higher education or private occupational school has
188 returned to substantial compliance.

This act shall take effect as follows and shall amend the following sections:		
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Section 1	<i>October 1, 2022</i>	10a-173
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Statement of Purpose:

To expand the Roberta B. Willis Scholarship program to students of private occupational schools.

[Proposed deletions are enclosed in brackets. Proposed additions are indicated by underline, except that when the entire text of a bill or resolution or a section of a bill or resolution is new, it is not underlined.]