

House Bill 801 (AS PASSED HOUSE AND SENATE)

By: Representatives Jones of the 47th, Dickey of the 140th, Nimmer of the 178th, Rogers of the 10th, Burns of the 159th, and others

A BILL TO BE ENTITLED
AN ACT

1 To amend Title 20 of the Official Code of Georgia Annotated, relating to education, so as to
2 revise various provisions regarding the HOPE scholarship; to include certain coursework in
3 computer science as optional rigor requirements; to provide for weighted scores for certain
4 college coursework; to provide for a biennial report; to clarify definitions; to provide for
5 related matters; to provide for effective dates; to repeal conflicting laws; and for other
6 purposes.

7 BE IT ENACTED BY THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF GEORGIA:

8 **SECTION 1.**

9 Title 20 of the Official Code of Georgia Annotated, relating to education, is amended in
10 Code Section 20-2-157, relating to the uniform reporting system for certain purposes and
11 academic eligibility requirements to receive a HOPE scholarship, by revising subsection (f)
12 as follows:

13 "(f) Beginning with students graduating from high school on or after May 1, 2017, in order
14 to be eligible to receive a HOPE scholarship, a student shall receive credit in at least four
15 courses prior to graduating from high school from the following categories:

- 16 (1) Advanced math, such as Advanced Algebra and Trigonometry, Math III, or an
17 equivalent or higher course;
- 18 (2) Advanced science, such as Chemistry, Physics, Biology II, computer science, or an
19 equivalent or higher course;
- 20 (3) Advanced placement courses in core subjects;
- 21 (3.1) Dual credit courses in core subjects;
- 22 (4) International baccalaureate courses in core subjects;
- 23 (5) Courses taken at a unit of the University System of Georgia in core subjects where
24 such courses are not remedial and developmental courses, as defined in Code Section
25 20-3-519; or
- 26 (6) Advanced foreign language courses.

27 Students may take one or more courses in each category; provided, however, that a course
 28 may shall only be counted one time. The Georgia Student Finance Commission shall be
 29 authorized to promulgate rules and regulations necessary to carry out the intent of this
 30 subsection."

31 SECTION 2.

32 Said title is further amended in Code Section 20-3-519.2, relating to eligibility requirements
 33 for a HOPE scholarship, by revising subsection (b) as follows:

34 "(b) To be eligible for a HOPE scholarship, a sophomore, junior, senior, or first
 35 professional student seeking an associate, baccalaureate, or first professional degree at an
 36 eligible postsecondary institution shall, in addition to meeting the residency requirements
 37 set forth in subsection (a) of Code Section 20-3-519.1:

38 (1) Meet achievement standards by meeting the following criteria:

39 (A) Earning a cumulative grade point average of at least 3.0 at a postsecondary
 40 institution:

41 (i) At the end of the quarter or semester in which the student has attempted 45, 90,
 42 or 135 quarter hours or 30, 60, or 90 semester hours if such student is a full-time
 43 student; or

44 (ii) At the end of three consecutive quarters or semesters if such student is a part-time
 45 student and has maintained part-time student status for three consecutive quarters or
 46 semesters; and

47 (B) Maintaining satisfactory academic progress in a course of study in accordance with
 48 the standards and practices used for federal Title IV programs by the postsecondary
 49 institution in which the student is enrolled; and

50 (2) Meet enrollment standards by being admitted, enrolled, and classified as an
 51 undergraduate or first professional student in a matriculated status.

52 Beginning in academic year 2017-2018, the cumulative grade point average calculated
 53 pursuant to this subsection shall include weighted grades for specific science, technology,
 54 engineering, and mathematics (STEM) college courses identified by the Board of Regents
 55 of the University System of Georgia in consultation with the Technical College System of
 56 Georgia, the Department of Economic Development, and private eligible postsecondary
 57 institutions, by increasing the grade assigned by the instructor to the student for any such
 58 course by an additional 0.5 point if such grade is a B, C, or D. Such courses shall be
 59 academically rigorous and required for or leading to employment in high demand fields in
 60 Georgia in science, technology, engineering, and mathematics. Beginning with the
 61 completion of the 2017-2018 academic year, the Georgia Student Finance Commission
 62 shall provide a biennial report to the chairpersons of the House Committee on Higher

63 Education and the Senate Higher Education Committee at the following general session of
 64 the legislature. The report shall include the fields identified as high demand fields and
 65 associated workforce shortages in science, technology, engineering, mathematics, and
 66 health care; the courses identified as academically rigorous and their relevance to such
 67 fields; and any other pertinent information that the Georgia Student Finance Commission
 68 deems relevant. The Governor shall be authorized to convene a task force to identify high
 69 demand fields and associated workforce shortages and may recommend to the Board of
 70 Regents of the University System of Georgia initial science, technology, engineering, and
 71 mathematics college courses to receive additional weight."

72 **SECTION 3.**

73 Said title is further amended in Code Section 20-3-519, relating to definitions relative to
 74 HOPE scholarships and grants, by revising paragraphs (9.1), (13), and (16.1) as follows:

75 "(9.1) 'Factor rate' means the percentage amount established by the Georgia Student
 76 Finance Commission against which the previous year tuition is multiplied for eligible
 77 public postsecondary institutions and against which the previous year HOPE award
 78 amount is multiplied for eligible private postsecondary institutions."

79 "(13) 'HOPE award rate' means the rate equal to the previous academic year HOPE
 80 tuition ~~payment to~~ charged by the eligible public postsecondary institution multiplied by
 81 the factor rate divided by 15. ~~Notwithstanding the foregoing, the~~ The Georgia Student
 82 Finance Commission ~~may adjust~~ shall recalculate the previous academic year HOPE
 83 tuition payment used to calculate the HOPE award rate to reflect changes in the mission
 84 or sector of an eligible public postsecondary institution that affects the tuition charged by
 85 that institution."

86 "(16.1) 'HOPE tuition payment' means, ~~in the case of an eligible public postsecondary~~
 87 ~~institution, the amount paid for tuition only based on the standard undergraduate full-time~~
 88 ~~tuition rate for 15 hours; and,~~ in the case of an eligible private postsecondary institution,
 89 the amount paid for tuition based on the amount established by the General Assembly in
 90 an appropriations Act."

91 **SECTION 4.**

92 (a) Except as otherwise provided in subsection (b) of this section, this Act shall become
 93 effective on July 1, 2016.

94 (b) Section 3 of this Act shall become effective on July 1, 2020.

95 **SECTION 5.**

96 All laws and parts of laws in conflict with this Act are repealed.