

The House Committee on Higher Education offers the following substitute to SB 137:

A BILL TO BE ENTITLED  
AN ACT

1 To amend Code Section 20-3-411 of the Official Code of Georgia Annotated, relating to  
2 definitions regarding tuition equalization grants at private colleges and universities, so as to  
3 revise the definition of approved school; to provide for legislative declarations and findings;  
4 to provide for related matters; to repeal conflicting laws; and for other purposes.

5 BE IT ENACTED BY THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF GEORGIA:

6 **SECTION 1.**

7 The General Assembly declares and finds that:

8 (1) As a body, it is committed to addressing the healthcare workforce shortage in  
9 Georgia, which includes having a sufficient number of quality nurses; and

10 (2) To increase the number of high-quality nurses in Georgia, crucial elements include  
11 providing financial assistance and removing impediments to practicing nursing.

12 **SECTION 2.**

13 Code Section 20-3-411 of the Official Code of Georgia Annotated, relating to definitions  
14 regarding tuition equalization grants at private colleges and universities, is amended by  
15 revising paragraph (2) as follows:

S. B. 137 (SUB)

16       "(2) 'Approved school' means:

17       (A) A nonproprietary institution of higher education located in this state which is not  
18       a branch of the university system; which is not a four-year or graduate level institution  
19       of higher education that is, or is a part of, a college or university system that is owned  
20       and operated by a state other than Georgia; which is accredited by the Southern  
21       Association of Colleges and Schools; which is not a graduate level school or college of  
22       theology or divinity; and which is not presently receiving state funds under Article 4  
23       of this chapter; provided, however, that an institution which otherwise meets the  
24       requirements of this definition and of this subpart except for the lack of accreditation  
25       by the Southern Association of Colleges and Schools shall be deemed to be an  
26       'approved school' during the period that the institution holds candidate for accreditation  
27       status with the Southern Association of Colleges and Schools; provided, further, that  
28       an institution which otherwise meets the requirements of this definition and of this  
29       subpart except for the lack of accreditation by the Southern Association of Colleges and  
30       Schools shall be deemed to be an 'approved school' if such institution was previously  
31       an 'approved school' under division ~~(iii)~~ (iv) of subparagraph (B) of this paragraph  
32       within the last five years; provided, further, that an institution which was previously  
33       accredited by the Southern Association of Colleges and Schools within the last seven  
34       years and which otherwise meets the requirements of this definition and of this subpart  
35       except for the lack of accreditation by the Southern Association of Colleges and  
36       Schools shall be deemed to be an 'approved school'; and

37       (B)(i) A qualified proprietary institution of higher education located in this state  
38       which is a baccalaureate degree-granting institution of higher education; which is  
39       accredited by the Southern Association of Colleges and Schools; which is not a Bible  
40       school or college (or, at the graduate level, a school or college of theology or  
41       divinity); which admits as regular students only persons who have a high school  
42       diploma, a state approved high school equivalency (HSE) diploma, or a degree from

43 an accredited postsecondary institution; whose students are eligible to participate in  
44 the federal Pell Grant program; which has been reviewed and approved for operation  
45 and for receipt of tuition equalization grant funds by the Georgia Nonpublic  
46 Postsecondary Education Commission; which is domiciled and incorporated in the  
47 State of Georgia; which has been in existence in the State of Georgia for at least ten  
48 years; and which met all of the requirements of this subparagraph by January 1, 2011;  
49 provided, however, that the criteria for approval for receipt of tuition equalization  
50 grant funds shall include but not be limited to areas of course study, quality of  
51 instruction, student placement rate, research and library sources, faculty, support staff,  
52 financial resources, physical plant facilities resources, and support and equipment  
53 resources.

54 (ii) A qualified proprietary institution of higher education located in this state which  
55 is a baccalaureate degree-granting institution of higher education offering a  
56 baccalaureate degree program or programs in nursing; which is accredited by the  
57 Southern Association of Colleges and Schools or by the Higher Learning  
58 Commission; which is accredited by the Commission on Collegiate Nursing  
59 Education; which has a National Council Licensure Examination four-year average  
60 passage rate of at least 85 percent; which is not a Bible school or college (or, at the  
61 graduate level, a school or college of theology or divinity); which admits as regular  
62 students only persons who have a high school diploma, a state approved high school  
63 equivalency (HSE) diploma, or a degree from an accredited postsecondary institution;  
64 whose students are eligible to participate in the federal Pell Grant program; which has  
65 been reviewed and approved for operation and for receipt of tuition equalization grant  
66 funds by the Georgia Nonpublic Postsecondary Education Commission; which has a  
67 physical location in the State of Georgia; and which has been in existence in the State  
68 of Georgia for at least five years; provided, however, that only the institution's  
69 baccalaureate degree program or programs in nursing shall be deemed collectively as

70 an approved school for the purposes of this subpart and provided, further, that the  
 71 institution shall only be deemed an approved school for the purposes of this subpart  
 72 for students who enroll in such institution on or before July 1, 2025.

73 ~~(ii)~~(iii) Any proprietary institution that is otherwise qualified pursuant to division (i)  
 74 of this subparagraph on July 1, 1995, shall be deemed to be eligible for receipt of  
 75 tuition equalization grant funds subject, however, to any subsequent review of such  
 76 approval pursuant to any proper regulations which may thereafter be adopted in  
 77 accordance with paragraph (10) of subsection (b) of Code Section 20-3-250.5  
 78 applicable to all qualified proprietary institutions.

79 ~~(iii)~~(iv) Any proprietary institution of higher education that is otherwise qualified  
 80 pursuant to division (i) of this subparagraph on January 1, 2011, shall continue to be  
 81 an approved school pursuant to this paragraph as long as it continues to meet the  
 82 requirements of division (i) of this subparagraph as such existed on March 14, 2011."

83 **SECTION 3.**

84 Said Code section is further amended by revising division (2)(B)(i) as follows:

85 "(B)(i) A qualified proprietary institution of higher education located in this state  
 86 which is a baccalaureate degree-granting institution of higher education; which is  
 87 accredited by the Southern Association of Colleges and Schools; which is not a Bible  
 88 school or college (or, at the graduate level, a school or college of theology or  
 89 divinity); which admits as regular students only persons who have a high school  
 90 diploma, a state approved high school equivalency (HSE) diploma, or a degree from  
 91 an accredited postsecondary institution; whose students are eligible to participate in  
 92 the federal Pell Grant program; which has been reviewed and approved for operation  
 93 and for receipt of tuition equalization grant funds by the Georgia Nonpublic  
 94 Postsecondary Education Commission; which is domiciled and incorporated in the  
 95 State of Georgia; which has been ~~in existence in the State of Georgia for at least ten~~

96 years located in this state since on or before January 1, 2021; and which met all of the  
97 requirements of this subparagraph by January 1, ~~2011~~ 2021; provided, however, that  
98 the criteria for approval for receipt of tuition equalization grant funds shall include but  
99 not be limited to areas of course study; quality of academic instruction; student  
100 placement rate; research and library ~~sources~~; resources; faculty; support staff;  
101 financial resources; ~~physical plant facilities resources~~; instructional campuses,  
102 facilities, or other physical sites; and support and equipment resources; provided,  
103 however, that an institution that qualifies pursuant to this division after January 1,  
104 2023, shall only be deemed an approved school for the purposes of this subpart for  
105 students who enroll in such institution on or before July 1, 2025."

106

**SECTION 4.**

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