

SENATE BILL 19

By Tracy

AN ACT to amend Tennessee Code Annotated, Title 49, Chapter 4, Part 9, relative to stipends for STEM majors.

BE IT ENACTED BY THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF THE STATE OF TENNESSEE:

SECTION 1. Tennessee Code Annotated, Section 49-4-902, is amended by adding the following language as a new, appropriately designated subdivision:

() "STEM major" means a student who has declared the student's major field of study to be a field of science, technology, engineering or mathematics or a health-related field.

SECTION 2. Tennessee Code Annotated, Title 49, Chapter 4, Part 9, is amended by adding the following language as a new, appropriately designated section:

49-4-9__.

(a) To be eligible for a STEM stipend, a student enrolled at an eligible four-year postsecondary institution shall:

- (1) Be a recipient of a Tennessee HOPE scholarship;
- (2) Have successfully completed at least sixty (60) semester hours; and
- (3) Be a declared STEM major.

(b) To be eligible for a STEM stipend, a student enrolled at an eligible two-year postsecondary institution shall be:

- (1) A recipient of a Tennessee HOPE scholarship; and
- (2) A declared STEM major.

(c) If a student receiving a STEM stipend ceases to be eligible for a Tennessee HOPE scholarship for any reason, then the student ceases to be eligible for the STEM stipend. If a student receiving a STEM stipend loses the Tennessee HOPE scholarship

and then regains the scholarship, the student may regain the STEM stipend; provided, that the student is a declared STEM major at the time the student regains the Tennessee HOPE scholarship.

(d) The STEM stipend shall be a loan bearing no interest. If a student receives a STEM stipend and the student changes majors to a non-STEM major, then the student shall be liable for repayment of funds received from the award of the STEM stipend. TSAC shall promulgate rules for the repayment of STEM stipends in a manner that will least affect the ability of students to graduate from the institution. If a student fails to repay the STEM stipend as required by TSAC, TSAC shall determine whether § 49-4-210 applies to the student who received the loan.

(e) A student who is eligible to receive both the general assembly merit scholarship and a STEM stipend may receive both awards. A student who is eligible to receive both an ASPIRE award and a STEM stipend may receive both awards.

(f) Subject to the amounts appropriated by the general assembly and any provision of law relating to a shortfall in funds available for postsecondary financial assistance from the net proceeds of the state lottery, a STEM stipend shall be one thousand dollars (\$1,000) for full-time attendance for the 2013-2014 academic year. For academic years subsequent to the 2013-2014 academic year, the amount of the STEM stipend shall be determined in accordance with § 4-51-111 and shall be set in the general appropriations act.

SECTION 3. TSAC are authorized to promulgate rules and regulations to effectuate the purposes of this act. All such rules and regulations shall be promulgated in accordance with Tennessee Code Annotated, Title 4, Chapter 5.

SECTION 4. The provisions of this act shall not be construed to be an appropriation of funds and no funds shall be obligated or expended pursuant to this act unless such funds are specifically appropriated by the general appropriations act.

SECTION 5. This act shall take effect upon becoming a law, the public welfare requiring it, and shall apply to students seeking postsecondary financial assistance from net lottery proceeds for the 2013-2014 academic year and academic years thereafter.