

**Proposed Substitute
Bill No. 353**

LCO No. 2688

**AN ACT CONCERNING THE CREATION OF THE CONNECTICUT
HOPE SCHOLARSHIP PROGRAM.**

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

- 1 Section 1. (NEW) (*Effective July 1, 2018*) (a) As used in this section:
- 2 (1) "Full-time undergraduate student" means a student who is
3 enrolled at a public institution of higher education in a course of study
4 leading to such student's first associate or bachelor's degree and who is
5 carrying twelve or more semester credit hours at such institution of
6 higher education;
- 7 (2) "Public institution of higher education" means the constituent
8 units of the state system of higher education identified in subdivisions
9 (1) and (2) of section 10a-1 of the general statutes; and
- 10 (3) "Eligible educational costs" means the tuition and required fees
11 for an individual student that are published by each public institution
12 of higher education participating in the grant program established
13 under this section, plus a fixed amount for required books and
14 educational supplies as determined by the Office of Higher Education.
- 15 (b) The state, acting through the Office of Higher Education, shall
16 establish the Connecticut Hope Scholarship program to annually make
17 merit-based financial aid available for eligible educational costs for

18 Connecticut residents enrolled as full-time undergraduate students at
19 public institutions of higher education. Any award made to a student
20 under this section shall be renewable annually, provided such student
21 meets and continues to meet the grade point average requirement set
22 forth in subsection (c) of this section.

23 (c) The Connecticut Hope Scholarship shall be available to any
24 Connecticut resident who (1) is enrolled as a full-time undergraduate
25 student at a public institution of higher education, (2) graduated with
26 an overall grade point average of at least 3.5 from a public high school
27 in the state not more than four years prior to enrolling as a full-time
28 undergraduate student at a public institution of higher education, and
29 (3) maintains an undergraduate college overall grade point average of
30 at least 3.5.

31 (d) The Office of Higher Education shall make scholarship awards
32 in an amount equal to the eligible educational costs for a student at the
33 public institution of higher education at which such student is
34 enrolled. The enrolling public institution of higher education shall
35 expend all of the scholarship money received under this section as
36 direct financial assistance only for eligible educational costs.

37 (e) The Connecticut Hope Scholarship program shall include an
38 administrative allowance based on one-quarter of one per cent of the
39 available appropriations, but not less than one hundred thousand
40 dollars.

41 (f) Public institutions of higher education shall annually provide the
42 Office of Higher Education with data and reports on all students who
43 receive a scholarship under this section, in a form and at a time
44 determined by said office. Each public institution of higher education
45 shall maintain, for a period of not less than three years, records
46 substantiating the reported number of students and documentation
47 utilized by the public institution of higher education in determining
48 eligibility of the student scholarship recipients. Such records shall be
49 subject to review or audit pursuant to subsection (g) of this section.

50 (g) In administering the Connecticut Hope Scholarship program, the
51 Office of Higher Education shall develop and utilize fiscal procedures
52 designed to ensure accountability of the public funds expended. Such
53 procedures shall include provisions for compliance reviews that shall
54 be conducted by the Office of Higher Education on any public
55 institution of higher education. Commencing with the fiscal year
56 ending June 30, 2019, and biennially thereafter, each public institution
57 of higher education shall submit the results of an audit done by an
58 independent certified public accountant of records maintained
59 pursuant to subsection (h) of this section.

This act shall take effect as follows and shall amend the following sections:		
Section 1	<i>July 1, 2018</i>	New section