



General Assembly

Amendment

January Session, 2019

LCO No. 9162



Offered by:

SEN. HASKELL, 26 th Dist.	SEN. LESSER, 9 th Dist.
REP. HADDAD, 54 th Dist.	SEN. NEEDLEMAN, 33 rd Dist.
SEN. LOONEY, 11 th Dist.	REP. TURCO, 27 th Dist.
SEN. DUFF, 25 th Dist.	REP. PHIPPS, 100 th Dist.
SEN. FLEXER, 29 th Dist.	REP. HUGHES, 135 th Dist.
SEN. WINFIELD, 10 th Dist.	REP. DOUCETTE, 13 th Dist.
SEN. BRADLEY, 23 rd Dist.	REP. MUSHINSKY, 85 th Dist.
SEN. KUSHNER, 24 th Dist.	REP. FELIPE, 130 th Dist.
SEN. DAUGHERTY ABRAMS, 13 th Dist.	REP. MICHEL, 146 th Dist.
SEN. LEONE, 27 th Dist.	

To: Subst. Senate Bill No. 273

File No. 257

Cal. No. 146

"AN ACT CONCERNING DEBT-FREE COLLEGE."

1 Strike everything after the enacting clause and substitute the
2 following in lieu thereof:

3 "Section 1. (NEW) (*Effective July 1, 2019*) (a) As used in this section:

4 (1) "Award" means (A) the unpaid portion, if any, of a qualifying
5 student's eligible institutional costs after subtracting his or her
6 financial aid, or (B) a minimum award of two hundred fifty dollars,
7 whichever is greater;

8 (2) "Eligible institutional costs" means the tuition and required fees
9 incurred each semester by an individual student that are established
10 by the Board of Regents for Higher Education for the regional
11 community-technical colleges;

12 (3) "Financial aid" means the sum of all scholarships, grants and
13 federal, state and institutional aid received by a qualifying student.
14 "Financial aid" does not include any federal, state or private student
15 loans received by a qualifying student;

16 (4) "Qualifying student" means any person who (A) graduated from
17 a public or nonpublic high school in the state, (B) enrolls as a full-time
18 student for the fall semester of 2020, or any semester thereafter, for the
19 first time at a regional community-technical college in a program
20 leading to a degree or certificate and continues to be enrolled as a full-
21 time student at a regional community-technical college, (C) is classified
22 as an in-state student pursuant to section 10a-29 of the general statutes,
23 (D) is making satisfactory academic progress while enrolled at a
24 regional community-technical college, (E) has completed the Free
25 Application for Federal Student Aid, and (F) has accepted all available
26 financial aid;

27 (5) "Full-time student" means a student who is enrolled at a regional
28 community-technical college and (A) who is carrying twelve or more
29 credit hours in a semester, or (B) who has a learning disability
30 documented with the regional community-technical college in which
31 he or she is enrolled and is enrolled in the maximum number of credit
32 hours that is feasible for such student to attempt in a semester, as
33 determined by such student's academic advisor; and

34 (6) "Semester" means the fall or spring semester of an academic year.
35 "Semester" does not include a summer semester or session.

36 (b) Not later than January 1, 2020, the Board of Regents for Higher
37 Education shall (1) establish a debt-free community college program to
38 make awards to qualifying students each semester, (2) adopt rules,
39 procedures and forms necessary to implement the debt-free

40 community college program, and (3) submit a report outlining such
41 rules, procedures and forms, in accordance with the provisions of
42 section 11-4a of the general statutes, to the joint standing committee of
43 the General Assembly having cognizance of matters relating to higher
44 education.

45 (c) For the fall semester of 2020, and each semester thereafter, the
46 Board of Regents for Higher Education shall make awards to
47 qualifying students within available appropriations. An award shall be
48 available to a qualifying student for the first seventy-two credit hours
49 earned by the qualifying student during the first thirty-six months that
50 such student is enrolled at a regional community-technical college,
51 provided the qualifying student meets and continues to meet the
52 requirements of this section. The board shall not use an award to
53 supplant any financial aid, including, but not limited to, state or
54 institutional aid, otherwise available to a qualifying student.

55 (d) (1) Any qualifying student who takes an administratively
56 approved medical or personal leave of absence from a regional
57 community-technical college may continue to qualify for the debt-free
58 community college program upon resuming his or her enrollment as a
59 full-time student at a regional community-technical college, provided
60 such student continues to meet the requirements of this section upon
61 reenrollment and the total amount of time of all approved leaves of
62 absence does not exceed six months.

63 (2) Any qualifying student who is a member of the armed forces
64 called to active duty during any semester may continue to qualify for
65 the debt-free community college program upon resuming his or her
66 enrollment as a full-time student at a regional community-technical
67 college, provided such student (A) continues to meet the requirements
68 of this section upon reenrollment, and (B) reenrolls not later than four
69 years after the date on which such student is released from active duty.

70 (e) Not later than March 1, 2021, and October 1, 2021, and each
71 semester thereafter, the Board of Regents for Higher Education shall

72 report, in accordance with the provisions of section 11-4a of the general
 73 statutes, to the joint standing committees of the General Assembly
 74 having cognizance of matters relating to higher education and
 75 employment advancement and appropriations regarding the debt-free
 76 community college program, including, but not limited to, (1) the
 77 number of qualifying students enrolled at the regional community-
 78 technical colleges during each semester, (2) the number of qualifying
 79 students receiving minimum awards and the number of qualifying
 80 students receiving awards for the unpaid portion of eligible
 81 institutional costs, (3) the average number of credit hours the
 82 qualifying students enrolled in each semester and the average number
 83 of credit hours the qualifying students completed each semester, (4)
 84 the average amount of the award made to qualifying students under
 85 this section for the unpaid portion of eligible institutional costs, and (5)
 86 the completion rates of qualifying students receiving awards under
 87 this section by degree or certificate program.

88 Sec. 2. (NEW) (*Effective July 1, 2019*) The month of December in each
 89 year shall be known as "FAFSA Month". On or before December 1,
 90 2019, the Board of Regents for Higher Education shall implement a
 91 program to host events for high school seniors and their families in
 92 each region of the state throughout the month of December in each
 93 year. During such events the board shall provide assistance to the high
 94 school seniors and their families in completing the Free Application for
 95 Federal Student Aid with the goal of increasing the number of such
 96 applications made by state residents each year."

This act shall take effect as follows and shall amend the following sections:		
Section 1	<i>July 1, 2019</i>	New section
Sec. 2	<i>July 1, 2019</i>	New section