



SPONSOR: Sen. Sokola & Rep. Heffernan
Sens. Bonini, Ennis, Gay, Hansen, Hocker, Lawson,
Lopez, Mantzavinos, S. McBride, Pettyjohn, Pinkney,
Poore, Richardson, Sturgeon, Townsend, Walsh, Wilson;
Reps. Baumbach, Briggs King, Collins, Gray, Griffith,
K. Johnson, Longhurst, Osienski, Postles, D. Short, Smyk

DELAWARE STATE SENATE
151st GENERAL ASSEMBLY

SENATE BILL NO. 263

AN ACT TO AMEND TITLE 14 OF THE DELAWARE CODE RELATING TO THE CULTURAL RESOURCE INCENTIVE PROGRAM.

1 WHEREAS, in 2011, the Delaware General Assembly enacted legislation establishing a professional education
2 incentive scholarship program in memory of former State Representative Ada Leigh Soles (1937–2010), a life-long
3 supporter of public libraries, to assist public library and archives staff members in seeking advanced education in their
4 fields; and

5 WHEREAS, museums and cultural resource agencies are finding it increasingly challenging to attract
6 professionals in these fields who possess advanced degrees required to meet the U.S. Secretary of Interior Historic
7 Preservation Professional Qualifications Standards in history, architectural history, or archaeology, and
8 to assist persons already employed by such agencies and organizations to further their education in order to obtain such
9 credentials; and

10 WHEREAS, such credentialing is required for organizations receiving federal funds available for work in the
11 cultural resources field; and

12 WHEREAS, this program would further strengthen efforts of the Division of Historical and Cultural Affairs to
13 recruit and retain a more diverse workforce, as HCA is currently challenged to find credentialed minority candidates for
14 federally-funded positions in the cultural resource field; and

15 WHEREAS, it has become increasingly clear that a program similar to the Ada Leigh Soles Memorial Professional
16 Librarian and Archivist Incentive Program, enacted in 2011 and found in Title 14, Subchapter III, § 3423, of the Delaware
17 Code, is needed to help such cultural resource agencies attract and retain qualified professionals in these fields; and

18 WHEREAS, in seeking an appropriate person for whom to name the said cultural resources incentive program, the
19 late Lewis M. Purnell (1921–2015) came immediately to mind, as a public-spirited citizen with a broad interest in Delaware
20 history, historic preservation, archaeology and related fields; and

21 WHEREAS, Mr. Purnell, known to his legions of friends as “Skipper,” retired with his wife, Matilda “Til” Horn
22 Purnell to their native Sussex County in the mid-1970s after having spent a career in the United States foreign service at
23 stations around the world, following Skipper’s earlier service in World War II; and

24 WHEREAS, a native of Georgetown and son of former Delaware State Senate President Pro Tempore Harold W.
25 T. Purnell, as a high school student in the 1930’s, Skipper had driven the young artist, Jack Lewis, around Sussex County
26 while Lewis worked on a series of watercolor paintings that later became part of his classic 1940 book, *The Delaware*
27 *Scene*; and

28 WHEREAS, a student at The Johns Hopkins University in the early 1940s, Skipper left college in 1942 to join the
29 American Field Service, serving as an ambulance driver with the British Army in North Africa and Italy and, having been
30 injured at the Battle of Monte Cassino in 1944, returned to the United States, where, in 1945, he entered the U.S. foreign
31 service; and

32 WHEREAS, the Purnells’ unique home on the shores of Herring Creek in coastal Sussex, consisting of several
33 18th century structures grouped together around a modern core, was itself an eloquent testimony to the commitment of
34 Skipper and his wife, Til, to the spirit of historic preservation; and

35 WHEREAS, Skipper, a true renaissance man, took a great interest in helping to further the study of Delaware
36 history and to preserve both archaeological and architectural treasures from our state’s rich past, serving for many years on
37 the Delaware Heritage Commission, among other volunteer service, and being a recipient of the Governor’s Heritage
38 Award; and

39 WHEREAS, naming a program designed to help those Delawareans who have chosen such a career path to further
40 their careers in honor of a man who devoted so much of his life to the furtherance of these fields in the State of Delaware
41 seems singularly appropriate.

42 NOW, THEREFORE:

43 BE IT ENACTED BY THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF THE STATE OF DELAWARE:

44 Section 1. Amend Subchapter III, Chapter 34, Title 14 of the Delaware Code by making deletions as shown by
45 strike through and insertions as shown by underline as follows:

46 § 3425. Lewis M. “Skipper” Purnell Cultural Resources Professional Incentive Program.

47 (a) Purpose. It is the intent and purpose of this Program to enable and encourage academically talented

48 Delawareans to pursue careers as cultural resources professionals.

49 (b) Awards.

50 (1) Awards shall be provided for graduate education in master’s degree programs of museum studies and
51 degrees required for meeting the U.S. Secretary of Interior Historic Preservation Professional Qualifications
52 Standards in history, architectural history, or archeology. Preference shall be given to persons currently employed
53 by a public museum or cultural resource agency, any subdivision of state, county, or municipal government
54 engaged in museum or cultural resources interpretation or management, or any institutional member of the
55 Delaware Museum Association. Preference shall also be given to persons employed by a State-recognized tribe
56 under §§ 106 and 107 of Title 29, or persons who otherwise serve in an official capacity to a State-recognized tribe
57 as nominated by the Chief or Tribal Council.

58 (2) Awards may also be provided for a course of study leading to a bachelor’s degree prior to the master’s
59 degree or a doctoral degree following the master’s degree. Awards shall be limited to persons who have been
60 employed by a public museum or cultural resource agency, or any subdivision of state, county, or municipal
61 government engaged in museum or cultural resources interpretation or management, or any institutional member
62 of the Delaware Museum Association for a minimum of 2 years.

63 (3) Selection criteria may include consideration of community service, academic achievement, and
64 financial need.

65 (c) Repayment and forgiveness.

66 (1) For purposes of this program, qualifying employment shall be employment as a museum professional
67 or cultural resources professional by a State-recognized tribe, public museum or cultural resource agency, or any
68 subdivision of state, county, or municipal government engaged in museum or cultural resources interpretation or
69 management, or any institutional member of the Delaware Museum Association in Delaware.

70 (2) Loans will be forgiven at the rate of 1 year of employment for 1 year of loan for bachelor’s degree
71 students, and 2 years of employment for 1 year of loan for master’s and doctoral degree students.

SYNOPSIS

This act would establish a cultural resources professional incentive program for the purpose of enabling and encouraging academically talented Delawareans to pursue careers as cultural resource professionals. It would also provide incentives for persons already serving in positions with cultural resource agencies, such as the Delaware Division of Historical and Cultural Affairs or with organizations that are institutional members of the Delaware Museum Association, among others, to further their professional education. This program would strengthen Delaware’s ability to both recruit and retain a more diverse workforce and would help the state meet federal credentialing requirements for federally-funded projects. The program would create a new “§ 3425” of Title 14, Subchapter III. It is modeled after the “Ada Leigh Soles Memorial Professional Librarian and Archivist Incentive Program” (Title 14, Section 3423 of the Delaware Code), enacted in 2011. The program would be named for the late Lewis M. “Skipper” Purnell, one of Delaware’s leading historical preservationists and husband of Mrs. Matilda “Til” Purnell, a great Delaware environmentalist in her own right.

Author: Senator Sokola