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HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES  
149th GENERAL ASSEMBLY

HOUSE BILL NO. 149

AN ACT ESTABLISHING THE COMPLETE YOUR DEGREE GRANT PROGRAM.

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

1 Section 1. Amend Chapter 34, Title 14 of the Delaware Code by adding thereto a new subchapter, designated as  
2 Subchapter XVI, which new subchapter shall read as follows:

3 SUBCHAPTER XVI. THE COMPLETE YOUR DEGREE GRANT PROGRAM.

4 § 3417A. Purpose.

5 This grant program will provide the necessary resources to prospective students who are reenrolling in a publicly  
6 funded associate degree program in this State.

7 § 3418A. Eligibility, generally; maintaining eligibility.

8 (a) To be eligible to participate in the Complete Your Degree Grant Program and to qualify for a grant to pay  
9 tuition pursuant to this subchapter for the reenrollment into an associate degree program in this State a student must meet  
10 all of the following:

11 (1) Must be enrolled on a full-time or part-time, degree-seeking basis at an eligible public postsecondary  
12 institution or, if a student with a disability, be seeking a degree through the institution's academic accommodation  
13 policy.

14 (2) The student may not have been convicted of any felony and the student shall certify such fact.

15 (3) A student shall have applied for all appropriate forms of financial aid for which the student is eligible  
16 including the federal Pell Grant, financial aid programs administered by the Delaware Higher Education Office, and  
17 financial aid programs administered by the eligible public postsecondary institution, and shall have accepted all such  
18 financial assistance offered or awarded to the student, except for loans.

19 (4) Must be a resident of this State for 1 year immediately preceding the date of application for a grant under  
20 this subchapter.

21 (5) Must not have been enrolled in or attended any postsecondary institution for at least 24 months  
22 immediately preceding the date of initial application for a grant under this subchapter.

23 (6) Must have earned a minimum of 30 credit hours toward completion of an associate degree as determined  
24 by the postsecondary institution attended.

25 (7) Must have a dependency status of independent and have an adjusted gross income attributable to the  
26 student that does not exceed \$36,000.

27 (b) A student will not be required to meet any academic standard at the time of enrollment in the eligible public  
28 postsecondary institution; except that the student must be mathematically able at the time of enrollment to achieve any  
29 grade point average required for graduation with the degree sought, as determined by the postsecondary institution  
30 attended.

31 (c) To maintain eligibility and continued state payment of tuition under the grant program as provided in this  
32 subchapter, the student must meet all of the following:

33 (1) Enroll in classes that lead to completion of an associate degree.

34 (2) Maintain satisfactory academic progress, earning at least 9 credit hours per semester during any fall or  
35 spring semester, unless otherwise required by the specific academic program in which the student is enrolled.

36 (3) Maintain continuous enrollment at an eligible public postsecondary institution for not less than two  
37 semesters in each successive academic year, unless granted an exception for cause by the institution.

38 (4) Achieve a minimum cumulative grade point average of at least 2.5 calculated on a 4.0 scale or as  
39 determined by the institution attended at the end of each academic semester. The institution may grant exceptions upon  
40 appeal.

41 (5) Reapply for the grant as specified by program requirements established by the eligible public  
42 postsecondary institution pursuant to § 3419A of this subchapter.

43 (d) If a student ceases to be eligible for the grant at any time for any reason the student will not be able to regain  
44 eligibility for a grant under this subchapter.

45 (e) If, as a result of applying for federal and state student financial aid, or through other means, it becomes  
46 apparent that deliberate fraud was involved in the application process, the institution may reevaluate the recipient's  
47 eligibility for a grant under this subchapter, and may withdraw a grant award. Any grant award made as a result of  
48 deliberate fraud may be recovered by the State through an action at law.

49 § 3419A. Implementation of application procedures; promotion.

50 (a) Each eligible public postsecondary institution shall establish and implement procedures to accept applications  
51 and award grants to eligible students subject to appropriations for such purpose.

52           (b) Each eligible public postsecondary institution shall develop, promote, and coordinate a public awareness  
53 program to inform students and parents of the Complete Your Degree Grant Program.

54           § 3420A. Grant awards; disbursement.

55           (a) Grants will be awarded on a first-come, first-served basis.

56           (b) Any grant awarded from this program shall be disbursed on a semester by semester basis upon receipt of  
57 enrollment verification.

58           (c) The amount of the grant will not exceed the cost of tuition and mandatory fees at the eligible public  
59 postsecondary institution attended less all other gift aid. The grant amount will be credited directly to the student's tuition  
60 and mandatory fees. In the semester of attendance in which the associate degree is obtained, the grant amount will not  
61 exceed the amount required for the student to complete the degree.

62           (d) Grant awards shall not exceed the available appropriation for each fiscal year. No more than a total of \$1.5  
63 million of state funding will be expended for the grant program during the initial 3 years, should such amount be available  
64 as determined by the General Assembly.

#### SYNOPSIS

This Act creates the Complete Your Degree Grant Program. Under this program, state funds may be provided to help eligible students who have completed at least 30 credit hours return to school and complete an associate degree.