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HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

140th GENERAL ASSEMBLY

HOUSE BILL NO. 545

AN ACT TO AMEND TITLE 14 OF THE DELAWARE CODE RELATING TO FINANCIAL ASSISTANCE
FOR HIGHER EDUCATION.

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

1 Section 1. Amend the descriptive title of Subchapter I, Chapter 34, Title 14 of the Delaware Code by
2 striking the descriptive title in its entirety and by substituting in lieu thereof the following:

3 "Subchapter I. Scholarship Incentive Program; Legislative Essay Scholarship Fund."

4 Section 2. Amend Chapter 34, Title 14 of the Delaware Code by adding thereto a new section to read:

5 "§3406. Legislative Essay Scholarship Fund.

6 (a) The purpose of the Legislative Essay Scholarship Fund is to award annually a \$500.00
7 nonrenewable scholarship to a 12th-grade student-resident from each senatorial and representative district in
8 the State whose essay meets the standards established by the Delaware Higher Education Commission
9 (Commission) and to award nonrenewable scholarships of \$5,000, \$2,500, and \$1,500 to the writers of the
10 top 3 district essays. A student who applies for a legislative essay scholarship must be enrolled in a public,
11 private, or charter school or be enrolled in a home school program.

12 (b) An applicant for a legislative essay scholarship shall submit an original essay of between 500
13 and 2,000 words on a topic that is chosen each year by a committee that consists of one member designated

14 by the Executive Director of the Delaware Higher Education Commission, one member designated by the
15 president of the Delaware Society Sons of the American Revolution, and one member designated by the
16 regent of the Delaware State Society Daughters of the American Revolution. The topic of the essay must
17 relate to:

18 (1) events, persons, philosophies, technologies, governments, or ideals in American
19 history;

20 (2) the approximate 90-year period from 1770 to 1860, including events leading up to the
21 American Revolutionary War, but excluding the Civil War; and

22 (3) a positive approach to the overall theme of 'Building the Foundations of the Modern
23 United States of America.'

24 (c) The Commission shall administer the Legislative Essay Scholarship Fund and may
25 adopt rules and regulations as it deems necessary and reasonable to administer the fund and to carry out the
26 purpose of this section. The rules and regulations must contain criteria for the selection of scholarship
27 recipients. The Commission shall encourage members of historical organizations, such as the Sons of the
28 American Revolution and the Daughters of the American Revolution, to participate in judging the student
29 essays.

30 (d) The Commission shall announce the recipients of the Legislative Essay Scholarships
31 on or before February 15th of each year."

32 Section 3. Scholarship funds disbursed under this Act may be disbursed only to the postsecondary
33 institution in which a recipient is enrolled and must be used by a recipient on or before December 31 of the third
34 calendar year following the year that the scholarship is awarded.

35 Section 4. The Commission shall report annually to the General Assembly the names of the scholarship
36 recipients, the scholarship amount received by each recipient, the postsecondary institution where the scholarship
37 was sent, and such other information as the Commission deems useful to the members of the General Assembly.

38 Section 5. This Act becomes effective upon the specific appropriation of funds for the Legislative Essay
39 Scholarship Fund in the Annual Appropriations Act.

SYNOPSIS

This bill creates an annual scholarship fund that will fund a \$500 nonrenewable scholarship to a 12th grader in each senatorial and representative district as well as a \$5,000, 2,500, and \$1,500 scholarship to the top 3 district scholarship winners.

The Delaware Higher Education Commission will administer the fund.

The essay topic each year must relate to American history between approximately 1770 and 1860.

The essay scholarship fund is based on the one-time George Washington Memorial Scholarship Fund which awarded scholarships during the 1999-2000 school year to high school seniors who submitted essays describing "Why George Washington Should Be Revered in America".