

SENATE BILL 509

F2

6lr1457

By: Senator Rosapepe

Introduced and read first time: February 2, 2026

Assigned to: Education, Energy, and the Environment

A BILL ENTITLED

1 AN ACT concerning

2 **Higher Education – Workforce Pell Grant Program – Implementation**

3 FOR the purpose of implementing the federal Workforce Pell Grant Program in the State;
4 requiring the Governor, after consultation with certain entities, to determine
5 whether to approve certain short-term programs as eligible for Pell Grant funds
6 subject to certain requirements; prohibiting institutions of postsecondary education
7 from using certain funds subject to a certain exclusion; prohibiting institutions of
8 postsecondary education from operating short-term programs in a certain manner;
9 and generally relating to the Workforce Pell Grant Program.

10 BY repealing and reenacting, without amendments,

11 Article – Education

12 Section 10–101(a), (c), and (i)

13 Annotated Code of Maryland

14 (2022 Replacement Volume and 2025 Supplement)

15 BY adding to

16 Article – Education

17 Section 11–212

18 Annotated Code of Maryland

19 (2022 Replacement Volume and 2025 Supplement)

20 SECTION 1. BE IT ENACTED BY THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF MARYLAND,
21 That the Laws of Maryland read as follows:

22 **Article – Education**

23 10–101.

24 (a) In this division the following words have the meanings indicated.

EXPLANATION: CAPITALS INDICATE MATTER ADDED TO EXISTING LAW.

[Brackets] indicate matter deleted from existing law.



1 (c) "Commission" means the Maryland Higher Education Commission.

2 (i) (1) "Institution of postsecondary education" means a school or other
3 institution that offers an educational program in the State for individuals who are at least
4 16 years old and who have graduated from or left elementary or secondary school.

5 (2) "Institution of postsecondary education" does not include:

6 (i) Any adult education, evening high school, or high school
7 equivalence program conducted by a public school system of the State; or

8 (ii) Any apprenticeship or on-the-job training program subject to
9 approval by the Apprenticeship and Training Council.

10 **11–212.**

11 (A) (1) IN THIS SECTION THE FOLLOWING WORDS HAVE THE MEANINGS
12 INDICATED.

13 (2) "**PROGRAM**" MEANS THE FEDERAL WORKFORCE PELL GRANT
14 PROGRAM BY WHICH PELL GRANTS MAY BE AWARDED TO STUDENTS ENROLLED IN
15 A SHORT-TERM PROGRAM IN ACCORDANCE WITH SECTION 83002 OF THE ONE BIG
16 BEAUTIFUL BILL ACT, AS AMENDED.

17 (3) "**SHORT-TERM PROGRAM**" MEANS A PROGRAM OF STUDY THAT IS:

18 (I) AT LEAST 150 HOURS OF INSTRUCTION;

19 (II) LESS THAN 600 HOURS OF INSTRUCTION;

20 (III) AT LEAST 8 WEEKS;

21 (IV) LESS THAN 15 WEEKS; AND

22 (V) NOT A CORRESPONDENCE COURSE AS DEFINED IN TITLE
23 34, SUBTITLE B, CHAPTER VI, PART 600 OF THE CODE OF FEDERAL REGULATIONS
24 IN EFFECT ON JULY 1, 2021.

25 (B) THE PURPOSE OF THIS SECTION IS TO IMPLEMENT THE WORKFORCE
26 PELL GRANT PROGRAM IN THE STATE.

27 (C) (1) THE GOVERNOR, AFTER CONSULTING WITH THE GOVERNOR'S
28 WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT BOARD AND THE COMMISSION, SHALL DETERMINE
29 WHETHER:

1 (I) A SHORT-TERM PROGRAM OFFERED AT AN INSTITUTION OF
2 POSTSECONDARY EDUCATION MEETS THE REQUIREMENTS OF THIS SECTION AND
3 FEDERAL LAW FOR WORKFORCE PELL GRANTS; AND

4 (II) TO APPROVE THE SHORT-TERM PROGRAM AS ELIGIBLE FOR
5 THE PROGRAM.

6 (2) (I) SUBJECT TO SUBPARAGRAPH (II) OF THIS PARAGRAPH, AN
7 INSTITUTION OF POSTSECONDARY EDUCATION, REGARDLESS OF HAVING A
8 PHYSICAL PRESENCE IN THE STATE, MAY NOT:

9 1. DISBURSE PROGRAM FUNDS TO A STUDENT IN THE
10 STATE; OR

11 2. ADVERTISE, MARKET, OR INFORM STUDENTS IN THE
12 STATE ABOUT THE AVAILABILITY OF PROGRAM FUNDS FOR A SHORT-TERM
13 PROGRAM.

14 (II) SUBPARAGRAPH (I) OF THIS PARAGRAPH DOES NOT APPLY
15 IF AN INSTITUTION OF POSTSECONDARY EDUCATION, REGARDLESS OF HAVING A
16 PHYSICAL PRESENCE IN THE STATE, OBTAINS:

17 1. THE APPROVAL OF THE GOVERNOR UNDER THIS
18 SECTION FOR EACH SHORT-TERM PROGRAM FOR WHICH THE INSTITUTION OF
19 POSTSECONDARY EDUCATION SEEKS TO DISBURSE PROGRAM FUNDS; AND

20 2. A DETERMINATION FROM THE SECRETARY OF THE
21 U.S. DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION THAT THE INSTITUTION OF POSTSECONDARY
22 EDUCATION MEETS THE REQUIREMENTS OF THE PROGRAM FOR EACH SHORT-TERM
23 PROGRAM FOR WHICH THE INSTITUTION OF POSTSECONDARY EDUCATION SEEKS TO
24 DISBURSE PROGRAM FUNDS.

25 (3) FOR THE APPROVAL TO REMAIN EFFECTIVE, EVERY 2 YEARS AN
26 INSTITUTION OF POSTSECONDARY EDUCATION SHALL PROVIDE INFORMATION
27 VERIFYING THE SHORT-TERM PROGRAM REMAINS IN COMPLIANCE WITH THIS
28 SECTION AND THE PROGRAM.

29 (4) IF THE ATTORNEY GENERAL OR COURT OF APPROPRIATE
30 JURISDICTION FINDS THE INSTITUTION OF POSTSECONDARY EDUCATION ENGAGED
31 IN UNFAIR, DECEPTIVE, OR ABUSIVE TRADE PRACTICE RELATED TO THE PROGRAM,
32 THE GOVERNOR SHALL REVOKE AN APPROVAL.

1 (D) (1) SUBJECT TO PARAGRAPH (2) OF THIS SUBSECTION, A
2 SHORT-TERM PROGRAM SEEKING APPROVAL UNDER THIS SECTION SHALL:

3 (I) PROVIDE AN EDUCATION ALIGNED WITH THE
4 REQUIREMENTS OF:

5 1. A HIGH-SKILL, HIGH-WAGE OCCUPATION AS
6 IDENTIFIED BY THE STATE UNDER THE CARL D. PERKINS CAREER AND TECHNICAL
7 EDUCATION ACT; OR

8 2. AN IN-DEMAND INDUSTRY SECTOR OR OCCUPATION;

9 (II) MEET THE HIRING REQUIREMENTS OF EMPLOYERS IN THE
10 SECTORS OR OCCUPATIONS IDENTIFIED UNDER ITEM (I) OF THIS PARAGRAPH;

11 (III) 1. LEAD TO A RECOGNIZED POSTSECONDARY
12 CREDENTIAL THAT IS STACKABLE AND PORTABLE ACROSS MORE THAN ONE
13 EMPLOYER; OR

14 2. PREPARE STUDENTS ENROLLED IN THE SHORT-TERM
15 PROGRAM FOR EMPLOYMENT IN AN OCCUPATION FOR WHICH THERE IS ONLY ONE
16 RECOGNIZED POSTSECONDARY CREDENTIAL AND THAT AWARDS STUDENTS WITH
17 THE CREDENTIAL ON COMPLETION OF THE SHORT-TERM PROGRAM; AND

18 (IV) PREPARE STUDENTS TO PURSUE ONE OR MORE
19 CERTIFICATES OR DEGREES AT AN INSTITUTION OF POSTSECONDARY EDUCATION
20 BY ENSURING THAT:

21 1. ON COMPLETION OF THE SHORT-TERM PROGRAM
22 AND ENROLLMENT IN A RELATED CERTIFICATE OR DEGREE PROGRAM, A STUDENT
23 WILL RECEIVE ACADEMIC CREDIT THAT AN INSTITUTION OF POSTSECONDARY
24 EDUCATION WILL ACCEPT TOWARD THAT CERTIFICATE OR DEGREE; AND

25 2. THE ACADEMIC CREDIT DESCRIBED UNDER ITEM 1 OF
26 THIS ITEM WILL BE ACCEPTED TOWARD MEETING THE CERTIFICATE OR DEGREE
27 PROGRAM REQUIREMENTS.

28 (2) THERE IS A REBUTTABLE PRESUMPTION THAT THE RELATED
29 TECHNICAL INSTRUCTION COMPONENT OF A FEDERALLY REGISTERED OR
30 STATE-REGISTERED APPRENTICESHIP PROGRAM OFFERED AT AN INSTITUTION OF
31 POSTSECONDARY EDUCATION SATISFIES THE REQUIREMENTS OF PARAGRAPH
32 (1)(I), (II), AND (III) OF THIS SUBSECTION.

1 **(3) IN ADDITION TO THE REQUIREMENTS OF PARAGRAPHS (1) AND (2)**
2 **OF THIS SUBSECTION, AN INSTITUTION OF POSTSECONDARY EDUCATION SEEKING**
3 **APPROVAL UNDER THIS SECTION SHALL PROVIDE:**

4 **(I) DOCUMENTATION THAT, FOR THE 12 MONTHS PRECEDING**
5 **THE DATE ON WHICH THE INSTITUTION OF POSTSECONDARY EDUCATION APPLIED**
6 **FOR APPROVAL, THE INSTITUTION OFFERED THE SHORT-TERM PROGRAM AND THE**
7 **SHORT-TERM PROGRAM MET ALL REQUIREMENTS OF THIS SECTION;**

8 **(II) DOCUMENTATION THAT THE SHORT-TERM PROGRAM HAS A**
9 **COMPLETION RATE OF AT LEAST 70% WITHIN 150% OF THE NORMAL TIME FOR**
10 **COMPLETION FOR EACH FEDERAL AID AWARD YEAR;**

11 **(III) DOCUMENTATION THAT THE SHORT-TERM PROGRAM HAS A**
12 **JOB PLACEMENT RATE OF AT LEAST 70% AFTER 180 DAYS OF COMPLETION FOR**
13 **EACH FEDERAL AID AWARD YEAR;**

14 **(IV) DOCUMENTATION THAT THE TUITION AND FEES FOR THE**
15 **SHORT-TERM PROGRAM ARE IN COMPLIANCE WITH THE REQUIREMENTS OF THE**
16 **PROGRAM; AND**

17 **(V) ANY INFORMATION THE COMMISSION REQUESTS TO VERIFY**
18 **COMPLIANCE WITH THIS SECTION AND THE PROGRAM.**

19 **(4) THE COMMISSION MAY COLLECT AN APPLICATION FEE TO**
20 **COMPLETE THE EVALUATION.**

21 **(E) IN THE OPERATION OF A SHORT-TERM PROGRAM THAT IS AUTHORIZED**
22 **UNDER THIS SECTION, AN INSTITUTION OF POSTSECONDARY EDUCATION MAY NOT:**

23 **(1) PARTNER, CONTRACT, OR AFFILIATE WITH AN ENTITY OTHER**
24 **THAN A JOINT APPRENTICESHIP COMMITTEE, TO OFFER INSTRUCTION FOR THE**
25 **SHORT-TERM PROGRAM THAT IS NOT ACCREDITED BY AN ACCREDITING AGENCY**
26 **RECOGNIZED AND APPROVED BY THE U.S. DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION;**

27 **(2) UNLESS A LOAN IS 0% INTEREST, PARTNER OR AFFILIATE WITH**
28 **AN ENTITY THAT OFFERS STUDENT LOANS, LINES OF CREDIT, OR INCOME SHARING**
29 **AGREEMENTS FOR THE SHORT-TERM PROGRAM;**

30 **(3) CHARGE TUITION AND FEES TO ANY STUDENT ENROLLED IN THE**
31 **SHORT-TERM PROGRAM THAT ARE GREATER THAN THE MAXIMUM AMOUNT OF PELL**
32 **GRANT FUNDS AVAILABLE FOR ANY STUDENT IN THAT SHORT-TERM PROGRAM, AS**

1 ESTABLISHED BY THE SECRETARY OF EDUCATION, FOR THE PERIOD OF TIME THAT
2 THE SHORT-TERM PROGRAM IS OFFERED; OR

3 (4) OFFER THE SHORT-TERM PROGRAM USING
4 NON-CREDIT-BEARING COURSES UNLESS THOSE COURSES WILL TRANSFER TO AT
5 LEAST ONE INSTITUTION OF POSTSECONDARY EDUCATION REGARDLESS OF
6 PROGRAM COMPLETION.

7 (F) (1) ON OR BEFORE JUNE 30 EACH YEAR, FOR EACH SHORT-TERM
8 PROGRAM APPROVED UNDER THIS SECTION, THE INSTITUTION OF POSTSECONDARY
9 EDUCATION SHALL REPORT TO THE COMMISSION ON:

10 (I) THE NUMBER OF STUDENTS ENROLLED IN SHORT-TERM
11 PROGRAMS APPROVED UNDER THIS SECTION;

12 (II) THE NUMBER OF STUDENTS WHO COMPLETED A
13 SHORT-TERM PROGRAM APPROVED UNDER THIS SECTION;

14 (III) IF THE INSTITUTION OF POSTSECONDARY EDUCATION IS
15 NOT PHYSICALLY LOCATED IN THE STATE, THE NUMBER OF STATE RESIDENTS WHO:

16 1. ENROLLED IN THE SHORT-TERM PROGRAM; AND

17 2. COMPLETED THE SHORT-TERM PROGRAM;

18 (IV) THE TOTAL COST OF ATTENDANCE, THE TOTAL TUITION
19 AND FEES, AND THE AVERAGE NET PRICE OF THE SHORT-TERM PROGRAM; AND

20 (V) DEMOGRAPHIC AND FINANCIAL AID INFORMATION OF
21 STUDENTS ENROLLED IN THE SHORT-TERM PROGRAM.

22 (2) ON OR BEFORE SEPTEMBER 30 EACH YEAR, THE COMMISSION
23 SHALL REPORT TO THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY, IN ACCORDANCE WITH § 2-1257 OF
24 THE STATE GOVERNMENT ARTICLE, A SUMMARY OF THE REPORTS REQUIRED
25 UNDER PARAGRAPH (1) OF THIS SUBSECTION AND THE DEMOGRAPHIC AND
26 FINANCIAL AID INFORMATION OF STATE STUDENTS WHO ENROLLED IN
27 SHORT-TERM PROGRAMS APPROVED UNDER THIS SECTION.

28 (G) THE COMMISSION MAY ADOPT REGULATIONS NECESSARY TO CARRY
29 OUT THIS SECTION.

30 SECTION 2. AND BE IT FURTHER ENACTED, That this Act shall take effect June
31 1, 2026.