

1 HB385  
2 191999-3  
3 By Representatives Lovvorn, McMillan, Beckman, Sells, Mooney,  
4 Shiver, Ingram, Howard, Ledbetter, Blackshear, Greer, Ford,  
5 Whorton (R), Williams (JW), Whorton (I), Martin, Gaston,  
6 Hurst, Fincher, Johnson (R), Coleman, Givan, Faust, Davis,  
7 Daniels, Beech, Crawford, Holmes (M), Wadsworth, Ellis, Shedd,  
8 Collins, Standridge, Todd, Farley, Sanderford, Pettus, Ball,  
9 Tuggle, Brown, Boothe, Drake, Alexander, Jackson, Boyd,  
10 Clarke, Drummond, Warren, Knight, McCampbell, Wingo, Nordgren,  
11 Butler, Hall and Rowe  
12 RFD: Ways and Means Education  
13 First Read: 06-FEB-18

ENGROSSED

A BILL  
TO BE ENTITLED  
AN ACT

To establish the Volunteer Rescue Squad Tuition Reimbursement Act of 2018; to require the Alabama Community College System, the Alabama Fire College, and the University of South Alabama, in consultation with the Alabama Association of Rescue Squads, to jointly develop and administer a tuition reimbursement program for students that successfully complete an Emergency Medical Technician (EMT) certification program; to state that the program shall be funded by direct appropriation from the Education Trust Fund; and to impose requirements for participation in the program including service with a volunteer rescue squad located in Alabama for a certain period of time.

BE IT ENACTED BY THE LEGISLATURE OF ALABAMA:

Section 1. For the purposes of this act, the following terms shall have the following meanings:

(1) ACCS. The Alabama Community College System.

(2) ASSOCIATION. The Alabama Association of Rescue

(3) EMERGENCY MEDICAL SERVICES PERSONNEL (EMSP). All recognized levels of personnel licensed by the Alabama

1 Department of Public Health, who have met all primary and/or  
2 renewal educational requirements set by the Alabama Department  
3 of Public Health, and are allowed to provide medical care  
4 within the level of their scope of practice granted by the  
5 Office of Emergency Medical Services (OEMS) within the Alabama  
6 Department of Public Health.

7 (4) FIRE COLLEGE. The Alabama Fire College.

8 (5) STUDENT. A student enrolled in an emergency  
9 medical services certification program at a member institution  
10 of the Alabama Community College System, the Alabama Fire  
11 College, or the University of South Alabama.

12 (6) VOLUNTEER RESCUE SQUAD. A volunteer rescue squad  
13 located in the state of Alabama and is a member of the Alabama  
14 Association of Rescue Squads.

15 Section 2. (a) The Alabama Community College System,  
16 the Alabama Fire College, and the University of South Alabama,  
17 in consultation with the association, shall jointly develop  
18 and administer a student tuition reimbursement program for  
19 students that agree in the form of an enforceable contract  
20 agreement, to provide emergency medical services for volunteer  
21 rescue squads in Alabama after becoming a licensed EMSP  
22 subject to the student agreeing to provide 3 years of service  
23 to a volunteer rescue squad.

24 (b) Tuition reimbursement under this act shall be  
25 the actual tuition costs paid by the student associated with  
26 obtaining certification. Tuition costs shall not be reimbursed  
27 until the student provides ACCS and the association with

1 documentation that he or she has successfully completed the  
2 approved course of instruction, proof of passing the  
3 certification exam, ~~and~~ production of a valid EMSP license  
4 from the Alabama Department of Public Health and a contractual  
5 agreement to comply with the service requirements.

6 (c) In the event that a tuition reimbursement  
7 recipient fails to meet the service requirements for any  
8 reason other than extreme hardship as defined within the joint  
9 agreement required in Section 5(b), the individual shall be  
10 deemed to have breached the underlying contract and shall be  
11 liable in the form of monetary damages to the state for the  
12 immediate repayment of the total tuition amount reimbursed,  
13 plus interest at the rate of 8 percent. The association shall  
14 notify ACCS of recipients who fail to meet the service  
15 requirements.

16 Section 3. Beginning October 1, 2018, the member  
17 institutions of the Alabama Community College System, the  
18 Alabama Fire College, and the University of South Alabama are  
19 authorized to enter into contracts with new students seeking  
20 to obtain certification as an EMSP.

21 Section 4. (a) The tuition reimbursement program  
22 ~~shall be funded by~~ is subject to direct ~~appropriation~~  
23 appropriations from the Education Trust Fund.

24 (b) Any monies appropriated for the program that are  
25 unexpended at the end of a fiscal year shall not revert, but  
26 shall be carried forward for use of the program in the next  
27 fiscal year.

1           Section 5. (a) The Alabama Community College System  
2 shall annually report on the condition and accomplishments of  
3 the tuition reimbursement program to the Governor, Speaker of  
4 the House of Representatives, President Pro Tempore of the  
5 Senate, the Chair of the House Ways and Means Education  
6 Committee, the Chair of the Senate Finance and Taxation  
7 Education Committee, and the Deputy Director of the Legislative  
8 Services Agency-Fiscal Division. The report shall include the  
9 number of students participating in the program and the amount  
10 of tuition reimbursed for the reporting year. The member  
11 institutions of the Alabama Community College System, the  
12 Alabama Fire College, and the University of South Alabama  
13 shall provide this information to ACCS for inclusion in the  
14 annual report. The report shall also include the usage rate  
15 percentage for the preceding fiscal year as calculated by  
16 dividing the amount of tuition reimbursed by the amount of  
17 funds appropriated to the program. If the usage rate  
18 percentage for any fiscal year is less than fifty percent  
19 (50%), the Alabama Community College System shall make a  
20 recommendation in the report to expand the tuition  
21 reimbursement program in the subsequent fiscal year to include  
22 certification expenditures for volunteer firefighters, subject  
23 to continued funding for the program. The report shall be  
24 submitted by the fifth legislative day of each regular session  
25 of the Legislature.

26           (b) The Alabama Community College System, the  
27 Alabama Fire College, and the University of South Alabama

1 shall enter into a joint agreement to implement and administer  
2 the tuition reimbursement program, which shall include  
3 provisions for ensuring that operational expenses for the  
4 program in a fiscal year do not exceed 2% of the funding for  
5 the program in that ~~fiscal year, such as limiting the~~  
6 ~~acceptance of applications~~ fiscal year. The joint agreement  
7 shall provide for limiting the acceptance of applications for  
8 the program and/or limiting tuition reimbursements when  
9 necessary.

10 (c) Any monies received for the operations of the  
11 tuition reimbursement program, including repayments, interest  
12 and penalties paid because of failure to honor service  
13 requirements, shall be used to fund tuition reimbursements.

14 Section 6. This act shall become effective  
15 immediately following its passage and approval by the  
16 Governor, or its otherwise becoming law.

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House of Representatives

Read for the first time and re-  
ferred to the House of Representa-  
tives committee on Ways and Means  
Education..... 06-FEB-18

Read for the second time and placed  
on the calendar with 1 substitute  
and 1 amendment..... 01-MAR-18

Read for the third time and passed  
as amended..... 08-MAR-18

Yeas 99, Nays 0, Abstains 0

Jeff Woodard  
Clerk