

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

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

(4) FIRE COLLEGE. The Alabama Fire College.

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

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

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

(b) Tuition reimbursement under this act shall be the actual tuition costs paid by the student associated with obtaining certification. Tuition costs shall not be reimbursed 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.

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

(b) The Alabama Community College System, the 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.

House of Representatives

Read for the first time and referred to the House of Representatives 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