

House Bill 56

By: Representatives Petrea of the 166<sup>th</sup>, Seabaugh of the 34<sup>th</sup>, Hitchens of the 161<sup>st</sup>, Sainz of the 180<sup>th</sup>, and Lumsden of the 12<sup>th</sup>

A BILL TO BE ENTITLED  
AN ACT

1 To amend Subpart 7 of Part 3 of Article 7 of Chapter 3 of Title 20 of the Official Code of  
2 Georgia Annotated, relating to grants to children of law enforcement officers, firefighters,  
3 and prison guards, so as to provide for tuition grants to spouses of law enforcement officers,  
4 firefighters, and prison guards who were killed or permanently disabled in the line of duty;  
5 to revise legislative findings; to provide for definitions; to provide for eligibility; to provide  
6 for conforming changes; to provide for related matters; to repeal conflicting laws; and for  
7 other purposes.

8 BE IT ENACTED BY THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF GEORGIA:

9 **SECTION 1.**

10 Subpart 7 of Part 3 of Article 7 of Chapter 3 of Title 20 of the Official Code of Georgia  
11 Annotated, relating to grants to children of law enforcement officers, firefighters, and prison  
12 guards, is amended by revising Code Section 20-3-450, relating to legislative findings and  
13 purpose of subpart, as follows:

14 "20-3-450.

15 The General Assembly finds that certain citizens are called upon to enforce the criminal  
16 laws of this state and to protect persons and properties within the state and that they provide

17 a valuable and vital public service to the state and to citizens and properties within the state  
18 at a great personal sacrifice and risk to their own lives and well-being. The purpose of the  
19 General Assembly, as provided for in this subpart, is to enable the authority to provide  
20 educational grant assistance to the spouses and children of such persons who are killed or  
21 permanently disabled in the line of duty."

## 22 SECTION 2.

23 Said subpart is further amended in Code Section 20-3-451, relating to definitions, by revising  
24 paragraph (3) and by adding new paragraphs to read as follows:

25 "(2.1) 'Eligible student' means a person who qualifies for an educational grant under this  
26 subpart.

27 (3) 'Firefighter' means a person employed, appointed, or regularly enrolled by the state  
28 or by any county or municipal fire department whose duties include extinguishing fires  
29 or investigating cases of suspected arson.

30 (3.1) 'In the line of duty' means:

31 (A) With respect to a volunteer firefighter, while on duty and when responding to or  
32 returning from a fire or other emergency, performing duties during any fire or other  
33 emergency, or performing duties intended to protect life and property, including,  
34 without limitation, actual participation in a training exercise;

35 (B) With respect to a law enforcement officer or firefighter, while on duty and  
36 performing services for and receiving compensation from the law enforcement or fire  
37 service agency which employs such officer or firefighter, while off duty when  
38 responding to any situation which would save a life or preserve the peace, or while  
39 preventing or attempting to prevent the commission of a crime or fire; or

40 (C) With respect to a prison guard, while on duty and performing services for and  
41 receiving compensation from the public agency which employs such prison guard."

**SECTION 3.**

Said subpart is further amended by revising Code Section 20-3-453, relating to eligibility of students, as follows:

"20-3-453.

No grants shall be payable to any person under this subpart who fails to meet any of the following qualifications or restrictions:

(1) Such person ~~must~~ shall be the spouse or child, either natural or adopted, of a law enforcement officer, firefighter, or prison guard who has been permanently disabled or killed in the line of duty or while performing the duties to which he or she was assigned in the normal course of employment. If such person is the adopted child of any such law enforcement officer, firefighter, or prison guard, such person ~~must~~ shall have been adopted and any final order of adoption issued prior to the date of the accident or event causing the death or permanent disability of such parent;

(2) Such person ~~must~~ shall have been a citizen of this state for a period of at least 12 months immediately prior to the date of registration in an approved school and ~~must~~ shall remain a citizen of ~~the~~ this state while receiving funds under this subpart;

(3) The deceased or disabled law enforcement officer, firefighter, or prison guard spouse or parent of such person ~~must~~ shall have been an employee, either full-time or part-time, or an officer or official, whether elected or appointed, of this state or any county, municipality, department, board, bureau, branch, agency, commission, authority, or political subdivision of the state on the date of the accident or event from which death or permanent disability resulted; and

(4) Any person otherwise meeting the conditions of this subpart shall be eligible to receive a grant even though the accident or the event causing the death or disability of such person's spouse or parent occurred prior to July 1, ~~1980~~ 2025."

**SECTION 4.**

Said subpart is further amended by revising Code Section 20-3-455, relating to administration of program and physical examinations, as follows:

"20-3-455.

The authority is authorized to prescribe such rules and regulations as may be necessary or convenient for administration of this program and to establish procedures for determination of eligibility of applicants. The authority is also authorized to establish standards and procedures for verifying the death or permanent disability of the applicant's spouse or parent and for such purpose is authorized to require a physical examination and to pay for the cost of such examination from funds appropriated for use by the authority for the purposes of this subpart."

**SECTION 5.**

All laws and parts of laws in conflict with this Act are repealed.