

AN ACT

To enact section 3333.421 of the Revised Code to authorize institutions of higher education to establish Ohio Hidden Hero Scholarship Programs.

Be it enacted by the General Assembly of the State of Ohio:

SECTION 1. That section 3333.421 of the Revised Code be enacted to read as follows:

Sec. 3333.421. (A) As used in this section:

(1) "Eligible caregiver" means an individual who is enrolled as a family caregiver under the "Program of Comprehensive Assistance for Family Caregivers," 38 U.S.C. 1720G and who provides care to a veteran, as defined in section 3333.31 of the Revised Code, who has a one hundred per cent service-connected disability.

(2) "Institution of higher education" has the same meaning as in section 3345.19 of the Revised Code.

(B) Each institution of higher education may establish an Ohio hidden hero scholarship program. Under the program, an institution shall accept applications to participate in the program from eligible caregivers who enroll in the institution. In each academic year in which an institution receives applications to participate in the program, the institution may approve one or more eligible caregivers to participate for that year. For each approved participant, the institution shall do all of the following:

(1) For each academic year in which the participant is enrolled, waive any instructional and general fees remaining for the participant after all other financial aid for which the participant qualifies has been applied to the participant's account, as determined by the institution;

(2) Provide the participant with a stipend, in an amount determined by the institution, to purchase textbooks in each academic year in which the participant is enrolled;

(3) Provide assistance to the participant to ensure that any college credits earned by the participant while enrolled in the institution may be transferred to another institution of higher education;

(4) Provide the participant with an opportunity to earn college credits for which the participant qualifies, as determined by the institution, based on the participant's caregiver experience.

(C) The chancellor of higher education shall establish guidelines and procedures for programs established under this section including an application form and an application deadline. Under the application, the chancellor shall require an applicant to provide a letter of eligibility from the United States department of veterans affairs. Not later than ninety days after the effective date of this section, the chancellor shall establish a web site regarding programs established under this section, which shall include a list of each institution that has established a program.

Speaker _____ *of the House of Representatives.*

President _____ *of the Senate.*

Passed _____, 20____

Approved _____, 20____

Governor.

The section numbering of law of a general and permanent nature is complete and in conformity with the Revised Code.

Director, Legislative Service Commission.

Filed in the office of the Secretary of State at Columbus, Ohio, on the ____ day of _____, A. D. 20 ____.

Secretary of State.

File No. _____ Effective Date _____