

Department of Planning and Budget 2009 Fiscal Impact Statement

1. Bill Number: SB1547

House of Origin X Introduced Substitute Engrossed
Second House In Committee Substitute Enrolled

2. Patron: Cuccinelli

3. Committee: Education and Health

4. Title: Eligibility for state financial aid programs.

5. Summary: Provides that persons who have successfully completed a program of home school instruction and certain persons who have been excused from school attendance are eligible to participate in and are eligible for all state-supported financial aid programs.

6. Fiscal Impact Estimates: Preliminary, see item 8.

7. Budget Amendment Necessary: No.

8. Fiscal Implications: According to State Council of Higher Education for Virginia (SCHEV), this language makes students who are home schooled eligible primarily for the Virginia Guaranteed Assistance Program (VGAP), budgeted in each individual state college or university. It is not known at this time what other financial aid or "higher education programs" might be affected. For state need-based financial aid, there would be no fiscal impact for additional funding as these students are already counted in the SCHEV financial aid model.

9. Specific Agency or Political Subdivisions Affected: All state colleges and universities.

10. Technical Amendment Necessary: A technical amendment may be necessary in order to reconcile that under the current proposed bill, home school students appear to be exempt from secondary school academic criteria that is required of all other VGAP recipients as § 23-38.53:6. Currently states "...must be graduates of a high school in the Commonwealth with a cumulative secondary school grade point average of at least 2.5 on a scale of 4.0 or its equivalent". Since most home school students do not have a recognized grade point average, this in effect either still excludes home school students from participation in VGAP or - if the bill is interpreted to override all secondary eligibility criteria - exempts home school students from initial academic review. If desired, an equivalent academic measure may be necessary for home school students who are unable to produce a recognized grade point average calculation. Broadly interpreted, the bill could be construed as exempting home school students from any financial aid requirement for any state need-based assistance, so a more narrowly written bill might be considered.

11. Other Comments: None.

Date: 2/6/2009 rsa
C: Secretary of Education

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