
OLR Bill Analysis

sSB 5 (File 164, as amended by Senate "A")*

AN ACT CONCERNING HIGHER EDUCATION AFFORDABILITY AND ACCOUNTABILITY.

SUMMARY

By law, the Office of Higher Education (OHE) allocates funds to higher education institutions to provide their eligible students with Roberta B. Willis Scholarship need-based awards. This bill requires OHE to notify each institution annually by November 1 of the amount of funds allocated to the institution for these awards in the following fiscal year. It also changes, from May 1 to April 1, the date by which institutions must return to OHE unused scholarship funds and specifies that OHE's required reallocation of these funds is for the next fiscal year.

Lastly, the bill deletes obsolete language and makes other technical changes, including removing the definition of and references to family contribution when calculating the allocation of funds to institutions for the need-based award, which reflects recent changes to the Free Application for Federal Student Aid.

*Senate Amendment "A" eliminates a provision of the underlying bill that would have increased the Roberta B. Willis Scholarship need-based award amount to the top of the current award range (\$4,500).

EFFECTIVE DATE: July 1, 2025

BACKGROUND

Roberta B. Willis Scholarship Program

The Roberta B. Willis Scholarship Program is administered by OHE and offers three types of awards to state residents who attend an in-state public or private higher education institution (excluding the community colleges): need-based, need-merit, and Charter Oak awards.

COMMITTEE ACTION

Higher Education and Employment Advancement Committee

Joint Favorable Substitute

Yea 18 Nay 0 (02/27/2025)

Appropriations Committee

Joint Favorable

Yea 38 Nay 12 (05/05/2025)

Finance, Revenue and Bonding Committee

Joint Favorable

Yea 38 Nay 16 (05/12/2025)