

ASSEMBLY, No. 4060

STATE OF NEW JERSEY 220th LEGISLATURE

INTRODUCED MAY 19, 2022

Sponsored by:

Assemblyman RAJ MUKHERJI

District 33 (Hudson)

Assemblyman HERB CONAWAY, JR.

District 7 (Burlington)

SYNOPSIS

Establishes scholarship program for graduate students and postdoctoral researchers studying unidentified aerial phenomenon and extraterrestrial technological signatures; requires Secretary of Higher Education to establish grant program; appropriates \$250,000.

CURRENT VERSION OF TEXT

As introduced.



1 AN ACT establishing a scholarship program for certain graduate
2 students and postdoctoral researchers, supplementing chapters
3 3B and 71B of Title 18A of the New Jersey Statutes, and making
4 an appropriation.

5
6 **BE IT ENACTED** *by the Senate and General Assembly of the State*
7 *of New Jersey:*

8
9 1. a. The Higher Education Student Assistance Authority shall
10 administer a scholarship program for graduate students and
11 postdoctoral researchers studying or conducting research in the
12 State in the fields of unidentified aerial phenomenon (UAP) and
13 signatures of extraterrestrial technological civilizations (ETCs).
14 The goal of the program shall be to:

15 (1) support the education and career development of scholars
16 who seek to advance the search for UAP and ETCs; and

17 (2) transform the search of UAP and ETCs from a subject of
18 ridicule and anecdotal evidence into a mainstream, transparent, and
19 scientifically-verifiable field of research.

20 Under the program, the authority shall award ten scholarships in
21 the amount of \$12,500 each to qualified recipients enrolled in or
22 employed by an institution of higher education in the State.

23 b. In order to be eligible for the scholarship, a candidate shall
24 submit an application to the authority, including a written
25 commitment from the institution of higher education at which the
26 candidate is enrolled or employed to match the scholarship in the
27 event the candidate is selected to receive one. A candidate shall
28 also submit a written statement to the authority detailing the
29 candidate's ongoing commitment to conducting transparent and
30 scientifically-verifiable research in the fields of UAP and ETCs.
31 The authority shall appoint a three-member selection committee to
32 review scholarship applications and make final determinations on
33 scholarship awards. Members of the selection committee shall be
34 selected based on their academic expertise in the field of
35 astronomy, physics, or astrophysics.

36 c. Each scholarship awarded under this act shall be contingent
37 upon the recipient receiving an equal scholarship from the
38 institution of higher education at which the scholar recipient is
39 enrolled or employed, and remaining in good standing at the
40 institution.

41 d. There is appropriated from the General Fund to the Higher
42 Education Student Assistance Authority the sum of \$125,000 to
43 effectuate the purposes of this section.

44
45 2. a. The Secretary of Higher Education shall develop a grant
46 program for four-year institutions of higher education to establish a
47 program for graduate students and postdoctoral researchers studying
48 or conducting research in the State in the fields of unidentified

1 aerial phenomenon (UAP) and extraterrestrial technological
2 civilizations (ETCs). The purpose of the program shall be to
3 provide grant funding to a four-year institution of higher education
4 to purchase the scientific equipment necessary, including but not
5 limited to, calibrated instrumentation, sensors, cameras, telescopes,
6 and computer hardware and software, to conduct transparent and
7 scientifically-verifiable research in UAP and ETCs.

8 b. An institution that wishes to participate in the grant program
9 established pursuant to subsection a. of this section shall submit an
10 application to the Secretary of Higher Education in a manner and on
11 such forms as determined by the secretary.

12 An application shall include information concerning the
13 institution's proposed program, including its plan to:

14 (1) obtain high-resolution images of UAP using multiple
15 detectors to discover their nature;

16 (2) conduct in-depth research on unexplained interstellar objects
17 and phenomena; and

18 (3) search for potential ETC satellites.

19 c. After reviewing the applications submitted pursuant to
20 subsection b. of this section, the secretary shall select one four-year
21 institution of higher education to participate in the program. The
22 institution selected to participate in the program shall provide a
23 matching grant to the program.

24 d. There is appropriated from the General Fund to the Secretary
25 of Higher Education the sum of \$125,000 to effectuate the purposes
26 of this section.

27
28 3. This act shall take effect immediately and shall first apply in
29 the first full academic year next following the date of enactment.
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31

32 STATEMENT

33
34 This bill establishes a scholarship program for graduate students
35 and postdoctoral researchers, and a grant program for four-year
36 institutions of higher education, to further the study of unidentified
37 aerial phenomenon (UAP) and extraterrestrial technology
38 civilizations (ETCs).

39 On June 25, 2021, the Office of the Director of National
40 Intelligence (ODNI) issued a report titled "Preliminary Assessment:
41 Unidentified Aerial Phenomenon." In its report, ODNI stated that
42 the limited amount of high-quality reporting on UAP hampers the
43 ability to draw firm conclusions about the nature of UAP. However,
44 the report also declared that, in a limited number of incidents, UAPs
45 reportedly appeared to exhibit unusual flight characteristics and that
46 UAPs "clearly pose a safety of flight and may pose a challenge to
47 United States national security." Specifically, the report stated that
48 "some UAP appeared to remain stationary in winds aloft, move

1 against the wind, maneuver abruptly, or move at considerable
2 speed, without discernable means of propulsion.” According to the
3 report, in addition to flight safety, UAPs could pose a broader
4 danger if some instances represent the sophisticated collection
5 against United States military activities by a foreign government
6 “or demonstrate a breakthrough aerospace technology by a potential
7 adversary.” Given the ODNI’s report, it is clear that UAPs – and the
8 search for signatures of ETCs – require rigorous, academic study.

9 The bill directs HESAA to administer a scholarship program for
10 graduate students and postdoctoral researchers studying or
11 conducting research in the State in the fields of unidentified aerial
12 phenomenon (UAP) and technological signatures of extraterrestrial
13 civilizations. Under the bill, the goal of the program is to:

- 14 • support the education and career development of scholars
15 who seek to advance the search for UAPs and extraterrestrial
16 technological signatures; and
- 17 • transform the search of UAPs and signatures of
18 extraterrestrial technological civilizations from a subject of
19 ridicule and anecdotal evidence into a mainstream,
20 transparent, and scientifically-verifiable field of research.

21 Under the program, HESAA will award ten scholarships in the
22 amount of \$12,500 each to qualified recipients enrolled in or
23 employed by an institution of higher education in the State. Under
24 the bill, HESAA will appoint a three-member selection committee
25 to review scholarship applications and make final determinations on
26 scholarship awards.

27 Under the bill, \$125,000 will be appropriated to HESAA for the
28 purposes of this act.

29 The bill also requires the Secretary of Higher Education to
30 develop a grant program for four-year institutions of higher
31 education to establish a program for graduate students and
32 postdoctoral researchers studying or conducting research in the
33 State in the fields of UAP and ETCs. The purpose of the program is
34 to provide grant funding to an institution to purchase the scientific
35 equipment necessary, including but not limited to, calibrated
36 instrumentation, sensors, cameras, telescopes, and computer
37 hardware and software, to conduct transparent and scientifically-
38 verifiable research in UAP and ETCs.

39 Under the bill, an application is required to include information
40 concerning the institution’s proposed program, including its plan to:

- 41 • obtain high-resolution images of UAP using multiple
42 detectors to discover their nature;
- 43 • conduct in-depth research on unexplained interstellar objects
44 and phenomena; and
- 45 • search for potential ETC satellites.

46 The secretary will select one four-year institution of higher
47 education to participate in the program. Under the bill, \$125,000
48 will be appropriated to the secretary for the purposes of this act.