

SENATE, No. 1976

STATE OF NEW JERSEY

220th LEGISLATURE

INTRODUCED MARCH 3, 2022

Sponsored by:

Senator NELLIE POU

District 35 (Bergen and Passaic)

Senator SANDRA B. CUNNINGHAM

District 31 (Hudson)

SYNOPSIS

Establishes “Minority-Serving State College and University Stabilization Program” in Office of Secretary of Higher Education; appropriates \$20 million.

CURRENT VERSION OF TEXT

As introduced.



1 AN ACT concerning minority-serving State colleges and
2 universities, supplementing chapter 64 of Title 18A of the New
3 Jersey Statutes, and making an appropriation.
4

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

8 1. This act shall be known and may be cited as the “Minority-
9 Serving State College and University Stabilization Act.”
10

11 2. The Legislature finds and declares that minority-serving
12 public institutions of higher education play an essential role in
13 helping students from diverse and at-risk backgrounds succeed in
14 our State. These institutions of higher education face unique
15 challenges as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic and the
16 Legislature finds that additional resources should be provided for
17 their support.
18

19 3. As used in this act:

20 “Minority-serving State college or university” means a State
21 college or university established pursuant to chapter 64 of Title 18A
22 of the New Jersey Statutes, in which at least 50 percent of
23 undergraduate students enrolled at the institution are members of
24 racial or ethnic minority groups.
25

26 4. a. There is established in the Office of the Secretary of
27 Higher Education the “Minority-Serving State College and
28 University Stabilization Program.” The purpose of the program
29 shall be to provide grants to minority-serving State colleges and
30 universities that experience:

31 (1) a declining enrollment of full-time undergraduate students of
32 at least 10 percent during the two years immediately preceding the
33 submission a stabilization plan; and

34 (2) a reduction in full-time instructional faculty and staff due to
35 fiscal reasons during the two years immediately preceding the
36 submission of a stabilization plan.

37 b. A minority-serving State college or university that wishes to
38 participate in the program shall submit a stabilization plan to the
39 Secretary of Higher Education. The stabilization plan shall contain
40 the following:

41 (1) a statement describing the nature of the fiscal distress
42 experienced by the minority-serving State college or university;

43 (2) a plan to address the declining enrollment of the college or
44 university;

45 (3) a plan to provide restoration and stabilization of staff and
46 support for students, which may include the recall of faculty and
47 staff whose employment at the college or university was recently
48 terminated or not renewed;

1 (4) strategies for deploying resources specifically to improve
2 institutional instruction and instructional support capacity and
3 encourage the enrollment and retention of students;

4 (5) input from the faculty and staff employed at the college or
5 university, which shall be evidenced in the form of a letter of
6 support from each of the majority representatives of respective
7 campus collective bargaining units;

8 (6) input from the broader community of the college or
9 university, which shall be evidenced in the form of a public hearing
10 and formal authorization from the board of trustees of the college or
11 university; and

12 (7) the grant amount requested by the college or university that
13 is deemed necessary to implement the stabilization plan.

14 The secretary shall establish the timelines and procedures for the
15 submission of the stabilization plan.

16 c. The secretary shall award grants under the program based
17 upon review of the stabilization plan submitted pursuant to
18 subsection b. of this section and subject to the limit of funds
19 appropriated or otherwise made available for the program. The
20 secretary shall make disbursements in amounts that are sufficient
21 for qualified institutions to carry out their approved stabilization
22 plans.

23
24 5. a. Within 180 days of receiving a grant pursuant to section 4
25 of this act, the minority-serving State college or university shall
26 submit a report to the secretary detailing the approved and proposed
27 expenditures made with the funds. The college or university shall,
28 within 180 days of the submission of the first report, submit a
29 second report to the secretary that details the expenditures made
30 with the remaining funds. The reports shall be made available on
31 an Internet website that is operated by or on behalf of the minority-
32 serving State college or university.

33 b. The secretary shall consult with each of the majority
34 representatives of the respective campus collective bargaining units
35 in order to review the reports. The secretary may seek input from
36 the faculty and staff employed at the college or university and
37 request additional financial information from the minority-serving
38 State college or university in order to review the reports.

39
40 6. To effectuate the provisions of this act, there is appropriated
41 to the Office of the Secretary of Higher Education the sum of
42 \$20,000,000, of which \$10,000,000 shall be appropriated from the
43 General Fund and \$10,000,000 shall, to the extent permitted by
44 federal law, be appropriated from funds received by the State under
45 the federal "American Rescue Plan (ARP) Act," Pub.L.117-2,
46 including, but not limited to, funds allocated to the State under the
47 federal "Coronavirus State Fiscal Recovery Fund," or any other
48 federal funding provided to address the impact of the coronavirus

1 pandemic. A minority-serving State college or university that
2 receives a grant pursuant to this act shall spend the funds in
3 accordance with its approved stabilization plan. If, at the end of a
4 fiscal year, there are unspent monies from the program, the
5 secretary shall distribute these funds to all minority-serving State
6 colleges and universities on a per student basis.

7
8 7. The Office of the Secretary of Higher Education shall adopt
9 rules and regulations pursuant to the “Administrative Procedure
10 Act,” P.L.1968, c.410 (C.52:14B-1 et seq.), as may be necessary to
11 implement the provisions of this act.

12
13 8. This act shall take effect immediately.

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16 STATEMENT

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18 This bill establishes the “Minority-Serving State College and
19 University Stabilization Program” in the Office of the Secretary of
20 Higher Education and makes an appropriation of \$20 million for the
21 bill’s purposes.

22 Under the bill, the program will provide grants to minority-
23 serving State colleges and universities that experience: a declining
24 enrollment of full-time undergraduate students of at least 10 percent
25 during the two years immediately preceding the submission of a
26 stabilization plan; and a reduction in full-time instructional faculty
27 and staff due to fiscal reasons during the two years immediately
28 preceding the submission of a stabilization plan.

29 A minority-serving State college or university that wishes to
30 participate in the program may submit a stabilization plan to the
31 Secretary of Higher Education. The stabilization plan is required to
32 contain the following:

33 (1) a statement describing the nature of the fiscal distress
34 experienced by the minority-serving State college or university;

35 (2) a plan to address the declining enrollment of the minority-
36 serving State college or university;

37 (3) a plan to provide restoration and stabilization of staff and
38 support for students;

39 (4) strategies for deploying resources specifically to improve
40 instructional and instructional support capacity and encourage the
41 enrollment and retention of students;

42 (5) input from faculty and staff employed at the college or
43 university, which will be evidenced in the form of a letter of
44 support from each of the majority representatives of the respective
45 campus collective bargaining units; and

46 (6) input from the broader community of the minority-serving
47 State college or university, which will be evidenced in the form of a

1 public hearing and formal authorization from the board of trustees
2 of the college or university.

3 The secretary is directed to establish the timelines and
4 procedures for the submission of the stabilization plan.

5 The bill directs the secretary to award grants under the program
6 based upon review of the stabilization plan and subject to the limit
7 of funds appropriated or otherwise made available for the program.
8 The secretary is required to make disbursements from the fund
9 sufficient for qualified institutions to carry out their approved
10 stabilization plans.

11 The bill requires that, within 180 days of receiving a grant
12 through the program, the minority-serving State college or
13 university will submit a report to the secretary detailing the
14 approved and proposed expenditures made with the funds. The
15 college or university is required, within 180 days of the submission
16 of the first report, to submit a second report to the secretary that
17 details the expenditures made with the remaining funds. The
18 reports are required to be made available on an Internet website that
19 is operated by or on behalf of the minority-serving State college or
20 university. Additionally, the bill directs the secretary to consult
21 with the respective campus collective bargaining agents in order to
22 review the reports. The secretary may seek input from the faculty
23 and staff employed at the college or university and request
24 additional financial information from the minority-serving State
25 college or university in order to review the reports.

26 To effectuate the provisions of the bill, there is appropriated to the
27 Office of the Secretary of Higher Education the sum of \$20,000,000,
28 of which \$10,000,000 will be appropriated from the General Fund and
29 of which \$10,000,000 will be appropriated from funds received by the
30 State under the federal “American Rescue Plan (ARP) Act,”
31 Pub.L.117-2 including, but not limited to, funds allocated to the State
32 under the federal “Coronavirus State Fiscal Recovery Fund,” or any
33 other federal funding provided to address the impact of the coronavirus
34 pandemic on institutions of higher education. A minority-serving
35 State college or university that receives a grant pursuant to the
36 provisions of this bill will be required to spend the funds in accordance
37 with its approved stabilization plan. If, at the end of a fiscal year, there
38 are unspent monies from the program, the secretary is directed by the
39 bill to distribute these funds to all minority-serving State colleges and
40 universities on a per student basis.