

Second Regular Session  
Seventy-first General Assembly  
STATE OF COLORADO

**PREAMENDED**

*This Unofficial Version Includes Committee  
Amendments Not Yet Adopted on Second Reading*

LLS NO. 18-1238.01 Julie Pelegrin x2700

**HOUSE BILL 18-1414**

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**HOUSE SPONSORSHIP**

**Buckner,**

**SENATE SPONSORSHIP**

**Priola,**

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**House Committees**

Education  
Appropriations

**Senate Committees**

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**A BILL FOR AN ACT**

101      **CONCERNING PROVIDING EMERGENCY ASSISTANCE GRANTS TO**  
102           **STUDENTS ENROLLED IN STATE INSTITUTIONS OF HIGHER**  
103           **EDUCATION TO ASSIST STUDENTS IN STAYING IN SCHOOL, AND, IN**  
104           **CONNECTION THEREWITH, CREATING THE EMERGENCY**  
105           **COMPLETION AND RETENTION GRANT PROGRAM AND MAKING AN**  
106           **APPROPRIATION.**

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**Bill Summary**

*(Note: This summary applies to this bill as introduced and does not reflect any amendments that may be subsequently adopted. If this bill passes third reading in the house of introduction, a bill summary that applies to the reengrossed version of this bill will be available at <http://leg.colorado.gov>.)*

The bill creates the emergency completion and retention grant

Shading denotes HOUSE amendment. Double underlining denotes SENATE amendment.  
Capital letters or bold & italic numbers indicate new material to be added to existing statute.  
Dashes through the words indicate deletions from existing statute.

program (grant program) in the department of higher education (department). The department implements the grant program by annually distributing an amount to each state institution of higher education (institution) to use in awarding emergency assistance grants to eligible students who are experiencing qualifying fiscal emergencies. The bill describes minimum procedures an institution must adopt for the financial aid director at the institution to award the emergency assistance grants. The department is required to include in the annual financial aid report submitted to the joint budget committee a summary of the implementation of the grant program and an evaluation of its effect in increasing the retention and completion rates at institutions.

1 *Be it enacted by the General Assembly of the State of Colorado:*

2 **SECTION 1.** In Colorado Revised Statutes, **add** part 12 to article  
3 3.3 of title 23 as follows:

4 **PART 12**

5 **EMERGENCY COMPLETION AND**

6 **RETENTION GRANTS**

7 **23-3.3-1201. Legislative declaration.** THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY  
8 FINDS THAT THE STUDENT FINANCIAL AID PROGRAMS EXISTING UNDER  
9 STATE LAW ARE DESIGNED TO REDUCE A STUDENT'S OVERALL COST OF  
10 ATTENDANCE AT AN INSTITUTION OF HIGHER EDUCATION. THERE ARE  
11 TIMES, HOWEVER, WHEN A STUDENT FACES A SUDDEN FINANCIAL  
12 EMERGENCY AND IS FORCED TO CHOOSE BETWEEN CONTINUING HIS OR HER  
13 EDUCATION OR PAYING FOR THE EMERGENCY. THE STUDENT FINANCIAL  
14 AID PROGRAMS LACK THE FLEXIBILITY NECESSARY TO ASSIST A STUDENT  
15 IN THIS SITUATION. THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY FINDS THEREFORE THAT A  
16 PROGRAM THAT PROVIDES LIMITED FINANCIAL ASSISTANCE TO ELIGIBLE  
17 STUDENTS WHO FACE UNANTICIPATED FISCAL EMERGENCIES IS NECESSARY  
18 TO INCREASE THE NUMBER OF STUDENTS WHO PERSIST AND GRADUATE  
19 WITH A POSTSECONDARY CREDENTIAL, REDUCE THE NUMBER OF STUDENTS

1 WHO DO NOT COMPLETE THEIR POSTSECONDARY EDUCATION, AND MEET  
2 THE WORKFORCE NEEDS OF BUSINESS AND INDUSTRY IN THE STATE.

3 **23-3.3-1202. Definitions.** AS USED IN THIS PART 12, UNLESS THE  
4 CONTEXT OTHERWISE REQUIRES:

5 (1) "DEPARTMENT" MEANS THE DEPARTMENT OF HIGHER  
6 EDUCATION CREATED AND EXISTING PURSUANT TO SECTION 24-1-114.

7 (2) "ELIGIBLE COURSE OF STUDY" MEANS CREDIT HOURS TAKEN TO  
8 COMPLETE A CAREER AND TECHNICAL EDUCATION CERTIFICATE, AN  
9 ASSOCIATE DEGREE, OR A BACCALAUREATE DEGREE.

10 (3) "ELIGIBLE STUDENT" MEANS A STUDENT WHO:

11 (a) QUALIFIES FOR IN-STATE TUITION AS PROVIDED IN THIS TITLE  
12 23;

13 (b) IS ENROLLED IN A STATE HIGHER EDUCATION INSTITUTION TO  
14 OBTAIN HIS OR HER FIRST POSTSECONDARY CREDENTIAL IN AN ELIGIBLE  
15 COURSE OF STUDY;

16 (c) MEETS THE ELIGIBILITY CRITERIA SPECIFIED IN THE STATE  
17 STUDENT FINANCIAL AID GUIDELINES; AND

18 (d) HAS COMPLETED MORE THAN SIXTY PERCENT OF THE COURSE  
19 CREDITS REQUIRED IN THE ELIGIBLE COURSE OF STUDY AND IS EXPECTED  
20 TO GRADUATE IN THE NEXT SEMESTER OR SCHOOL YEAR FOLLOWING THE  
21 DATE ON WHICH HE OR SHE APPLIES FOR EMERGENCY ASSISTANCE.

22 (4) "FINANCIAL AID DIRECTOR" MEANS THE FINANCIAL AID  
23 DIRECTOR FOR A STATE HIGHER EDUCATION INSTITUTION, OR HIS OR HER  
24 DESIGNEE.

25 (5) "GRANT PROGRAM" MEANS THE EMERGENCY COMPLETION AND  
26 RETENTION GRANT PROGRAM CREATED IN SECTION 23-3.3-1203.

27 (6) "QUALIFYING FINANCIAL EMERGENCY" MEANS AN UNEXPECTED

1 EVENT THAT CAUSES AN ELIGIBLE STUDENT TO INCUR A LEVEL OF  
2 UNPLANNED COST THAT MAY REQUIRE THE ELIGIBLE STUDENT TO  
3 WITHDRAW FROM POSTSECONDARY EDUCATION. A QUALIFYING FINANCIAL  
4 EMERGENCY MAY INCLUDE, BUT NEED NOT BE LIMITED TO:

- 5 (a) INCURRING COSTS FOR VEHICLE REPAIR;
- 6 (b) BEING UNABLE TO PAY RENT OR PURCHASE FOOD AS A RESULT  
7 OF UNEXPECTED, EXIGENT CIRCUMSTANCES, AS DETERMINED BY THE  
8 FINANCIAL AID DIRECTOR;
- 9 (c) INCURRING COSTS AS A RESULT OF A MEDICAL EMERGENCY;
- 10 (d) INCURRING TRAVEL OR OTHER COSTS AS A RESULT OF A FAMILY  
11 EMERGENCY;
- 12 (e) INCURRING OTHER NECESSARY COSTS THAT ARE NOT  
13 PREDICTABLE EDUCATIONAL EXPENSES, AS DETERMINED BY THE  
14 FINANCIAL AID DIRECTOR; AND
- 15 (f) OTHER SITUATIONS AS MAY BE IDENTIFIED BY THE STATE  
16 HIGHER EDUCATION INSTITUTION.

17 (7) "STATE HIGHER EDUCATION INSTITUTION" MEANS A STATE  
18 INSTITUTION OF HIGHER EDUCATION AS DEFINED IN SECTION 23-18-102, A  
19 LOCAL DISTRICT COLLEGE OPERATING PURSUANT TO ARTICLE 71 OF THIS  
20 TITLE 23, OR AN AREA TECHNICAL COLLEGE AS DEFINED IN SECTION  
21 23-60-103.

22 **23-3.3-1203. Emergency completion and retention grant**  
23 **program - created.** (1) THERE IS CREATED IN THE DEPARTMENT OF  
24 HIGHER EDUCATION THE EMERGENCY COMPLETION AND RETENTION GRANT  
25 PROGRAM TO PROVIDE MONEY TO STATE HIGHER EDUCATION INSTITUTIONS  
26 TO USE IN ASSISTING ELIGIBLE STUDENTS WHO EXPERIENCE A QUALIFYING  
27 FINANCIAL EMERGENCY. THE DEPARTMENT SHALL ADMINISTER THE GRANT

1 PROGRAM BY:

2 (a) SUBJECT TO ANNUAL APPROPRIATIONS, ANNUALLY  
3 DISTRIBUTING MONEY TO THE STATE HIGHER EDUCATION INSTITUTIONS TO  
4 USE FOR EMERGENCY ASSISTANCE GRANTS AWARDED TO STUDENTS  
5 PURSUANT TO SECTION 23-3.3-1204 TO ADDRESS QUALIFYING FINANCIAL  
6 EMERGENCIES;

7 (b) ADOPTING GUIDELINES FOR USE BY THE FINANCIAL AID  
8 DIRECTORS AT THE STATE HIGHER EDUCATION INSTITUTIONS IN PROVIDING  
9 EMERGENCY ASSISTANCE GRANTS TO STUDENTS, INCLUDING STUDENT  
10 ELIGIBILITY CRITERIA;

11 (c) ESTABLISHING THE REPORTING CRITERIA FOR THE STATE  
12 HIGHER EDUCATION INSTITUTIONS TO ENABLE THE DEPARTMENT TO  
13 MEASURE THE SUCCESS OF THE GRANT PROGRAM IN RAISING THE  
14 PERSISTENCE AND GRADUATION RATES AT THE STATE HIGHER EDUCATION  
15 INSTITUTIONS;

16 (d) ACTING AS A CLEARINGHOUSE FOR INFORMATION CONCERNING  
17 THE GRANT PROGRAM, INCLUDING ELIGIBILITY CRITERIA AND EXAMPLES  
18 OF MATERIALS THAT STATE HIGHER EDUCATION INSTITUTIONS MAY USE IN  
19 PUBLICIZING TO STUDENTS THE AVAILABILITY OF EMERGENCY ASSISTANCE  
20 GRANTS; AND

21 (e) INCLUDING IN THE INFORMATION ANNUALLY SUBMITTED TO  
22 THE JOINT BUDGET COMMITTEE PURSUANT TO SECTION 23-3.3-102(7) THE  
23 AMOUNT ANNUALLY DISTRIBUTED TO EACH STATE HIGHER EDUCATION  
24 INSTITUTION THROUGH THE GRANT PROGRAM, THE AMOUNTS DISTRIBUTED  
25 IN EMERGENCY ASSISTANCE GRANTS BY EACH STATE HIGHER EDUCATION  
26 INSTITUTION, THE NUMBER OF STUDENTS AND TYPES OF EMERGENCIES FOR  
27 WHICH GRANTS WERE PROVIDED, AND AN EVALUATION OF WHETHER THE

1 GRANT PROGRAM IS CONTRIBUTING TO AN INCREASE IN THE COMPLETION  
2 AND RETENTION RATES AT THE STATE INSTITUTIONS OF HIGHER  
3 EDUCATION, TO THE EXTENT SUFFICIENT INFORMATION IS AVAILABLE.  
4 AFTER THE GRANT PROGRAM HAS OPERATED FOR THREE FISCAL YEARS,  
5 THE ANNUAL REPORT MUST ALSO INCLUDE THE RETURN ON INVESTMENT  
6 FOR THE PROGRAM AS CALCULATED BY THE DEPARTMENT.

7 **23-3.3-1204. State higher education institutions - student**  
8 **emergency assistance grants.** (1) EACH STATE HIGHER EDUCATION  
9 INSTITUTION SHALL DEVELOP A PROCESS BASED ON GUIDELINES BY WHICH  
10 AN ELIGIBLE STUDENT MAY APPLY FOR AND RECEIVE A STUDENT  
11 EMERGENCY ASSISTANCE GRANT.

12 (2) IN AWARDING EMERGENCY ASSISTANCE GRANTS, THE STATE  
13 HIGHER EDUCATION INSTITUTION SHALL PRIORITIZE ELIGIBLE STUDENTS  
14 WHO ARE LOW-INCOME, ELIGIBLE STUDENTS WHO ARE IN THE FIRST  
15 GENERATION OF THEIR FAMILY TO ENROLL IN POSTSECONDARY  
16 EDUCATION, AND ELIGIBLE STUDENTS WHO LACK OTHER IDENTIFIABLE  
17 FINANCIAL RESOURCES TO SUPPORT THEIR POSTSECONDARY EDUCATION.

18 (3) THE FINANCIAL AID DIRECTOR SHALL DETERMINE THE AMOUNT  
19 OF EACH EMERGENCY ASSISTANCE GRANT BASED ON THE ELIGIBLE  
20 STUDENT'S LEVEL OF FINANCIAL NEED. AN ELIGIBLE STUDENT SHALL NOT  
21 RECEIVE MORE THAN A TOTAL OF ONE THOUSAND FIVE HUNDRED DOLLARS  
22 IN EMERGENCY ASSISTANCE GRANTS WHILE ENROLLED AT A SINGLE STATE  
23 HIGHER EDUCATION INSTITUTION.

24 (4) IN DISBURSING EMERGENCY ASSISTANCE, THE FINANCIAL AID  
25 DIRECTOR SHALL DETERMINE THE MOST EFFICIENT MANNER IN WHICH TO  
26 ADDRESS THE ELIGIBLE STUDENT'S QUALIFYING FINANCIAL EMERGENCY,  
27 WHICH, WHERE APPROPRIATE, MAY INCLUDE PAYING A VENDOR DIRECTLY

1 FOR THE ELIGIBLE STUDENT'S EXPENSES.

2 (5) AS OF JUNE 1 OF EACH FISCAL YEAR, IF A STATE HIGHER  
3 EDUCATION INSTITUTION HAS NOT DISTRIBUTED THE ENTIRE AMOUNT  
4 ALLOCATED TO THE INSTITUTION FOR EMERGENCY ASSISTANCE GRANTS  
5 FOR THAT FISCAL YEAR, THE INSTITUTION MAY DISTRIBUTE THE  
6 REMAINING AMOUNT AS EMERGENCY ASSISTANCE GRANTS DURING THE  
7 SUMMER SEMESTER OR DURING THE NEXT FISCAL YEAR OR DISTRIBUTE  
8 ANY PORTION OF THE REMAINING AMOUNT AS NEED-BASED STUDENT  
9 FINANCIAL AID.

10 **SECTION 2. Appropriation.** For the 2018-19 state fiscal year,  
11 \$1,500,000 is appropriated to the department of higher education. This  
12 appropriation is from the general fund. To implement this act, the  
13 department may use this appropriation for student emergency completion  
14 and retention grants.

15 **SECTION 3. Safety clause.** The general assembly hereby finds,  
16 determines, and declares that this act is necessary for the immediate  
17 preservation of the public peace, health, and safety.