

GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF NORTH CAROLINA
SESSION 2007

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SENATE BILL 178

Short Title: Tuition Discount for Fire Science Programs.

(Public)

Sponsors: Senators Rand; and Purcell.

Referred to: Education/Higher Education.

February 15, 2007

A BILL TO BE ENTITLED

1 AN ACT TO PROVIDE A DISCOUNT IN TUITION FOR ANY STUDENT WHO
2 ENROLLS IN A FIRE SCIENCE DEGREE PROGRAM AT ANY
3 CONSTITUENT INSTITUTION OF THE UNIVERSITY OF NORTH CAROLINA
4 OR THE NORTH CAROLINA COMMUNITY COLLEGE SYSTEM.
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6 The General Assembly of North Carolina enacts:

7 **SECTION 1.** Article 14 of Chapter 116 of the General Statutes is amended
8 by adding a new section to read:

9 **"§ 116-143.10. Tuition of certain students enrolled in fire science programs.**

10 (a) Definitions. – The following definitions apply in this section:

11 (1) Constituent institution or institution. – Defined in G.S. 116-2.

12 (2) Discount tuition rate. – A sum equal to fifty percent (50%) of the
13 in-state tuition rate charged by the constituent institution in which the
14 person enrolls as an undergraduate student.

15 (3) Fire science baccalaureate degree program. – Any baccalaureate
16 degree program with a fire science major or similar major that requires
17 a majority of academic credits for the major in courses that focus on
18 fire-related issues such as fire dynamics, firefighting, fire protection
19 and safety, fire department management and other types of fire service
20 administration, fire scene investigation and analysis, and human
21 behavioral and psychological responses to fires. The requirements may
22 include academic coursework, internships, and cooperative work
23 experience.

24 (b) Discount Tuition Rate for Student Enrolled in Fire Science Baccalaureate
25 Degree Program. – Notwithstanding G.S. 116-143.1, any person who is a legal resident
26 of North Carolina, qualifies for admission into a constituent institution, and enrolls in
27 the institution as a full-time undergraduate student in a baccalaureate degree program in
28 fire science shall be charged a discount tuition rate for the academic year. The discount

1 shall be granted for each academic year that a student who majors in fire science takes
2 coursework that counts as academic credit toward that major.

3 (c) Contractual Conditions of Discount Tuition Rate. – Any student receiving a
4 discount tuition rate under this section shall enter into a legal agreement with the
5 constituent institution or the State Education Assistance Authority as appropriate to
6 accept employment in this State in the field of fire science for a period of two years. The
7 terms of the contract shall address the following: the time period within which the
8 student must satisfy the employment requirement set out by this subsection, the
9 schedule and terms for repaying the discount plus interest in the event the student does
10 not work in this State in the field of fire science, changes in a student's academic status
11 and how those changes may affect the determination of whether a student is in breach of
12 the contract including a student's transfer to another institution of higher education,
13 delayed graduation, or failure to graduate, and any other terms deemed necessary or
14 appropriate to administer the contract. The constituent institution or State Education
15 Assistance Authority, as appropriate, may forgive or reduce any repayment of the
16 discount if it finds that extenuating circumstances exist that would make repayment
17 impossible.

18 (d) State Education Assistance Authority May Administer Discount Tuition Rate.
19 – The State Education Assistance Authority may administer the functions regarding the
20 discount tuition rate and the execution and enforcement of contract terms for a
21 constituent institution if requested by the Board of Governors or a constituent institution
22 to do so. The State Education Assistance Authority may also adopt rules as necessary to
23 carry out its responsibilities under this section.

24 (e) Board of Governors to Adopt Policies Regarding Discount Tuition Rate. –
25 The Board of Governors shall adopt any policies necessary to implement the provisions
26 of this section.

27 (f) Legislative Intent: – Constituent Institution Shall Not Incur Revenue Loss as
28 Result of Discount Tuition Rate. – It is the intent of the General Assembly that no
29 constituent institution shall incur a loss in revenue by providing a discount tuition rate
30 under this section; therefore, the General Assembly intends that the difference between
31 the tuition rate and the discount tuition rate be funded by monies from the General
32 Fund."

33 **SECTION 2.** Article 1 of Chapter 115D of the General Statutes is amended
34 by adding a new section to read:

35 **"§115D-8.1. Tuition of certain students enrolled in fire science programs.**

36 (a) Definitions. – The following definitions apply in this section:

37 (1) Community college. – Defined in G.S. 115C-2(2).

38 (2) Discount tuition rate. – A sum equal to fifty percent (50%) of the
39 in-State tuition rate.

40 (3) Fire science degree program. – Any program that leads to an associate
41 degree in fire protection technology.

42 (b) Discount Tuition Rate for Student Enrolled in Fire Science Degree Program.
43 – Notwithstanding any other provision of law, any person who is a legal resident of
44 North Carolina, qualifies for admission into a community college, and enrolls in the

1 community college as a full-time undergraduate student in an associate degree program
2 in fire science shall be charged a discount tuition rate for the academic year. The
3 discount shall be granted for each academic year that a student takes coursework that
4 counts as academic credit toward a degree in fire science.

5 (c) Contractual Conditions of Discount Tuition Rate. – Any student receiving a
6 discount tuition rate under this section shall enter into a legal agreement with the
7 Community Colleges System Office or the State Education Assistance Authority, as
8 appropriate, to accept employment in this State in the field of fire science for a period of
9 one year. The terms of the contract shall address the following: the time period within
10 which the student must satisfy the employment requirement set out by this subsection,
11 the schedule and terms for repaying the discount plus interest in the event the student
12 does not work in this State in the field of fire science, changes in a student's academic
13 status and how those changes may affect the determination of whether a student is in
14 breach of the contract including a student's transfer to another institution of higher
15 education, delayed graduation, or failure to graduate, and any other terms deemed
16 necessary or appropriate to administer the contract. The Community Colleges System
17 Office or State Education Assistance Authority, as appropriate, may forgive or reduce
18 any repayment of the discount if it finds that extenuating circumstances exist that would
19 make repayment impossible.

20 (d) State Education Assistance Authority May Administer Discount Tuition Rate.
21 – The State Education Assistance Authority may administer the functions regarding the
22 discount tuition rate and the execution and enforcement of contract terms for the
23 Community Colleges System Office if requested by the State Board of Community
24 Colleges to do so. The State Education Assistance Authority may also adopt rules as
25 necessary to carry out its responsibilities under this section.

26 (e) State Board of Community Colleges to Adopt Policies Regarding Discount
27 Tuition Rate. – The State Board of Community Colleges shall adopt any policies
28 necessary to implement the provisions of this section.

29 (f) Legislative Intent: – Community Colleges Shall Not Incur Revenue Loss as
30 Result of Discount Tuition Rate. – It is the intent of the General Assembly that no
31 community college shall incur a loss in revenue by providing a discount tuition rate
32 under this section; therefore, the General Assembly intends that the difference between
33 the tuition rate and the discount tuition rate be funded by monies from the General
34 Fund.

35 (g) Nothing in this section shall be construed to require volunteer firefighters to
36 pay tuition for coursework taken toward a degree in fire protection technology."

37 **SECTION 3.** This act becomes effective July 1, 2007, and applies to the
38 2007-2008 academic year and each subsequent academic year.