

**As Introduced**

**136th General Assembly  
Regular Session  
2025-2026**

**H. B. No. 793**

**Representative Thomas, J.**

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To enact section 3333.0421 of the Revised Code and 1  
to amend Section 381.400 of H.B. 96 of the 136th 2  
General Assembly regarding cost of attendance at 3  
institutions of higher education. 4

**BE IT ENACTED BY THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF THE STATE OF OHIO:**

**Section 1.** That section 3333.0421 of the Revised Code be 5  
enacted to read as follows: 6

**Sec. 3333.0421.** (A) As used in this section: 7

(1) "Institution of higher education" means either of the 8  
following: 9

(a) A private college, as defined in section 3365.01 of 10  
the Revised Code; 11

(b) A state institution of higher education, as defined in 12  
section 3345.011 of the Revised Code. 13

(2) "Ohio resident" means a resident of this state under 14  
rules adopted under section 3333.31 of the Revised Code. 15

(B) Annually, each institution of higher education shall 16  
report to the chancellor, in a form and manner prescribed by the 17  
chancellor, the cost of attendance for an Ohio resident who is 18  
enrolled as an undergraduate student in the institution in that 19

<u>academic year.</u>	20
<u>(C) Annually, the chancellor shall post both of the</u>	21
<u>following on a web page on the chancellor's public web site:</u>	22
<u>(1) The definition of "cost of attendance" prescribed in</u>	23
<u>20 U.S.C. 108711;</u>	24
<u>(2) Each cost of attendance reported by an institution of</u>	25
<u>higher education under this section.</u>	26
<b>Section 2.</b> That Section 381.400 of H.B. 96 of the 136th	27
General Assembly be amended to read as follows:	28
<b>Sec. 381.400.</b> GOVERNOR'S MERIT SCHOLARSHIP	29
(A) The foregoing appropriation item 235530, Governor's	30
Merit Scholarship, shall be used by the Chancellor of Higher	31
Education to administer the Governor's Merit Scholarship Program	32
and to award merit-based aid to qualifying institutions on	33
behalf of eligible students. Funds awarded under this section	34
shall be used in a manner consistent with the goal of allowing	35
high-achieving high school graduates to remain in Ohio to pursue	36
their post-secondary studies and contribute to Ohio's expanding	37
economic opportunities.	38
(B) In awarding funds under this section, and to the	39
extent that funds are sufficient to do so, the Chancellor shall	40
provide per-student awards of \$5,000 per academic year to	41
eligible students determined to be in the top five per cent of	42
their public or nonpublic high school graduating class at the	43
end of their junior year, as determined by their public or	44
nonpublic high school using criteria established by the	45
Chancellor in consultation with the Director of Education and	46
Workforce. School districts and nonpublic high schools shall	47
provide the information as requested by the Chancellor to	48

determine scholarship eligibility. Eligible students shall 49  
receive an award for up to the equivalent of four academic years 50  
of instruction at a qualifying institution, contingent on 51  
satisfactory academic progress. 52

(C) The Chancellor, in consultation with the Director, 53  
shall determine eligibility for graduating high school students 54  
who were home schooled to provide a level of access to the 55  
program described in this section that is reasonably 56  
commensurate with the merit-based criteria used to determine 57  
eligibility for students graduating from a public or nonpublic 58  
high school. 59

(D) The Governor's Merit Scholarship shall be used to pay 60  
eligible expenses, as determined by the Chancellor, included 61  
within the published cost of attendance at a qualifying 62  
institution. 63

(E) A qualifying institution shall not make changes to 64  
scholarship or financial aid programs offered by that 65  
institution that have the goal or net effect of shifting the 66  
cost burden of those programs to the program described in this 67  
section. Institutions of higher education that enroll students 68  
receiving merit-based financial aid grants under this section 69  
shall maintain the same level of merit-based financial aid the 70  
institution provided in the most recent academic year in the 71  
aggregate to all students or on a per-student basis. 72

No qualifying institution shall reduce the amount of 73  
institutional financial aid it has offered to a student who 74  
receives a scholarship under this section, unless the student's 75  
total financial aid exceeds the institution's cost of attendance 76  
posted under section 3333.0421 of the Revised Code. In that 77  
case, the qualifying institution shall reduce the student's 78

<u>institutional financial aid until the student's total financial</u>	79
<u>aid is equal to the cost of attendance.</u>	80
(F) Notwithstanding any provision of law to the contrary,	81
the Chancellor may establish guidelines for the purpose of	82
implementing this section, except that the Chancellor shall not	83
place limits on the number of students receiving an award under	84
this section that enroll at a qualifying institution.	85
(G) As used in this section, "qualifying institution"	86
means any of the following:	87
(1) A state institution of higher education, as defined in	88
section 3345.011 of the Revised Code;	89
(2) A private nonprofit institution of higher education	90
holding a certificate of authorization under Chapter 1713. of	91
the Revised Code.	92
<b>Section 3.</b> That existing Section 381.400 of H.B. 96 of the	93
136th General Assembly is hereby repealed.	94