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H.407

Introduced by Representatives Savage of Swanton and Gamache of Swanton
Referred to Committee on
Date:
Subject: Education; Native Americans of Vermont; scholarship
Statement of purpose of bill as introduced: This bill proposes to create a
competitive scholarship program for Vermont Native Americans to attend the
University of Vermont and the Vermont State Colleges and to create a specialty
vehicle registration plate to provide partial funding for this program.

An act relating to creating the Vermont Native American Scholarship
Program

It is hereby enacted by the General Assembly of the State of Vermont:
Sec. 1. 16 V.S.A. chapter 87, subchapter 9 is added to read:

Subchapter 9. Vermont Native American Scholarship Program

§ 2880n. VERMONT NATIVE AMERICAN SCHOLARSHIP PROGRAM

(a) Definition. As used in this section, “Native American” means a
member of a Vermont State Recognized Native American Tribe.

(b) Program creation. There is created the Vermont Native American
Scholarship Program to encourage Native Americans to attend and obtain a

1 degree, diploma, or certification from the University of Vermont or the
2 Vermont State Colleges.

3 (c)(1) Creation; Vermont Native American Scholarship Committee. There
4 is created the Vermont Native American Scholarship Committee (Scholarship
5 Committee), to be composed of the following members:

6 (A) the President of the University of Vermont or designee;

7 (B) the Chancellor of the Vermont State Colleges or designee;

8 (C) a representative of the Vermont Commission on Native American
9 Affairs; and

10 (D) up to six further members that the Scholarship Committee may
11 appoint at its discretion.

12 (2) Terms. Scholarship Committee members shall serve, commencing
13 on August 1, three-year terms or until the member's earlier resignation or
14 removal.

15 (3) Officers; subcommittees; rules. The Scholarship Committee shall
16 elect a chair from among its members. It may elect other officers, establish
17 subcommittees, and adopt procedural rules as it determines necessary and
18 appropriate to perform its work.

19 (4) Quorum; voting; meetings.

20 (A) A majority of all members shall constitute a quorum.

1 (B) Action is taken by the Scholarship Committee if authorized by a
2 majority of the members present and voting at any regular or special meeting at
3 which a quorum is present.

4 (C) The Scholarship Committee may permit any or all members to
5 participate in a regular or special meeting by, or conduct the meeting through
6 the use of, any means of electronic communication by which all members
7 participating may simultaneously or sequentially communicate with each other
8 during the meeting. A member participating in a meeting by this means is
9 deemed to be present in person at the meeting.

10 (5) Administrative support. The University of Vermont shall provide
11 administrative support to the Scholarship Committee.

12 (6) Initial meeting. On or before September 1, 2019, the President of
13 the University of Vermont shall convene the first meeting of the Scholarship
14 Committee.

15 (7) Report. Notwithstanding 2 V.S.A. § 20(d), the Scholarship
16 Committee shall report to the House and Senate Committees on Education and
17 on Appropriations on or before January 15 annually regarding the Scholarship
18 Committee's activities, applications received, and grants awarded under this
19 chapter.

1 (d) Eligibility. The Scholarship Committee shall determine eligibility for
2 scholarships, select scholarship recipients, and administer the Vermont Native
3 American Scholarship Program.

4 (1) The Scholarship Committee shall award scholarships on a competitive
5 basis.

6 (2) An individual shall be eligible for a scholarship only if he or she:

7 (A) is a Native American;

8 (B) is a graduate of a Vermont public secondary school, or of a public
9 school in another state that is designated as the public school for the student's
10 district of residence, or of an approved or recognized independent secondary
11 school located in Vermont; or was a home study student who is a resident of
12 Vermont;

13 (C) is accepted and enrolled, or plans to enroll, in the University of
14 Vermont or the Vermont State Colleges for the forthcoming academic
15 term; and

16 (D) demonstrates a high likelihood of academic success and remains
17 in academic good standing during enrollment.

18 (3) The Scholarship Committee shall award scholarships for either the full
19 or partial cost of tuition for all or part of a scholarship recipient's enrollment in the
20 University of Vermont or the Vermont State Colleges; provided, however, that a
21 scholarship recipient shall submit documentation required by the Scholarship

1 Committee in a form and at such times as determined by the Scholarship
2 Committee.

3 (e) Funding. The Vermont Native American Scholarship Fund is
4 established in the Office of the State Treasurer and shall be administered
5 pursuant to 32 V.S.A. chapter 7, subchapter 5, except that interest earned on
6 the Fund and any remaining balance shall be retained in the Fund. The Fund
7 shall comprise the following:

8 (1) an annual appropriation by the General Assembly;

9 (2) fees from the purchase of specialty Vermont Native American
10 Scholarship Fund Vermont Department of Motor Vehicles License Plates
11 pursuant to 23 V. S.A. § 304d;

12 (3) notwithstanding 16 V.S.A. § 2885(f), disbursements from the Higher
13 Education Endowment Trust Fund;

14 (4) disbursements from other scholarship funds managed by the
15 University of Vermont and the Vermont State Colleges;

16 (5) appropriations from Vermont towns and municipalities;

17 (6) town scholarships under 16 V.S.A. § 2535; and

18 (7) grants or gifts made to the University of Vermont or the Vermont
19 State Colleges that specifically designate the Vermont Native American
20 Scholarship Fund.

1 Sec. 2. 23 V.S.A. § 304d is added to read:

2 § 304d. VERMONT NATIVE AMERICAN SCHOLARSHIP FUND

3 REGISTRATION PLATES

4 (a) The Commissioner shall, upon application, issue Vermont Native
5 American Scholarship Fund (VNASF) registration plates for use only on
6 vehicles registered at the pleasure car rate, on trucks registered for less than
7 26,001 pounds, and on motor vehicles registered to State agencies under
8 section 376 of this title, but excluding vehicles registered under the
9 International Registration Plan. VNASF registration plates shall be mounted
10 on the front and rear of the vehicle. For design of the plates, the Commissioner
11 shall use the graphic design recommended by the Vermont Commission on
12 Native American Affairs to enhance public awareness of the State's interest in
13 postsecondary education of Vermont State Recognized Native American
14 Tribes. Applicants shall apply on forms prescribed by the Commissioner and
15 shall pay an initial fee of \$20.00 in addition to the annual fee for registration.
16 In subsequent years, in addition to the annual registration fee, the holder of a
17 VNASF plate shall pay a renewal fee of \$20.00. The Commissioner may adopt
18 rules under 3 V.S.A. chapter 25 to implement the provisions of this subsection.

19 (b) Initial fees collected under subsection (a) of this section shall be
20 allocated as follows:

21 (1) 25 percent to the Transportation Fund; and

1 (2) 75 percent to the Vermont Native American Scholarship Fund
2 created in 16 V.S.A. § 2880n.

3 (c) Renewal fees collected under subsection (a) of this section shall be
4 allocated as follows:

5 (1) 15 percent to the Transportation Fund; and

6 (2) 85 percent to the Vermont Native American Scholarship Fund
7 created in 16 V.S.A. § 2880n.

8 (d) The Department of Corrections shall produce the VNASF registration
9 plates for the Department of Motor Vehicles and the Department of Motor
10 Vehicles shall pay for their production.

11 Sec. 3. EFFECTIVE DATE

12 This act shall take effect on July 1, 2019 and, pursuant to the terms of
13 16 V.S.A. § 2880n, Vermont Native American Scholarship Program awards
14 shall be available to scholarship recipients enrolled in the University of
15 Vermont or Vermont State Colleges in the fall semester of 2021 and thereafter.