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H.245

Introduced by Representatives Hooper of Burlington, Andriano of Orwell,
Anthony of Barre City, Austin of Colchester, Boyden of
Cambridge, Brownell of Pownal, Casey of Montpelier, Christie
of Hartford, Demrow of Corinth, Goldman of Rockingham,
Graning of Jericho, Harrison of Chittenden, Hooper of
Randolph, Lipsky of Stowe, McCann of Montpelier, Morris of
Springfield, Mrowicki of Putney, Ode of Burlington, Troiano of
Stannard, and Waters Evans of Charlotte

Referred to Committee on

Date:

Subject: Education; higher education; tuition assistance; youth in foster and
kinship care

Statement of purpose of bill as introduced: This bill proposes to expand the
appropriation, annual award, and eligibility for the 802 Opportunity Grant.

An act relating to tuition assistance for youth in foster and kinship care

It is hereby enacted by the General Assembly of the State of Vermont:

Sec. 1. 16 V.S.A. § 2845 is amended to read:

§ 2845. TRUST FUND; GRANTS; STUDENTS IN DEPARTMENT FOR
CHILDREN AND FAMILIES CUSTODY

1 (a) The Board shall establish a trust fund to be used to provide grants for
2 students who do not have parental support and are or have been under the
3 custody of the Commissioner for Children and Families. The Board may draw
4 up to 90 percent of the assets in the fund for these purposes.

5 (b) The trust fund shall consist of:

6 (1) funds appropriated by the General Assembly; and

7 (2) any gifts, grants, or contributions made to the trust fund.

8 (c) The Board may determine whether the trust fund is to be managed by
9 the State Treasurer or by a private firm contracted at the direction of the Board.

10 (d) Any amount remaining in the trust fund at the end of any fiscal year and
11 any interest accruing to the trust fund shall remain in the fund.

12 (e)(1) ~~A child who is under the custody of the Commissioner for Children~~
13 ~~and Families, or a young adult between the ages of 18 and 24 who was under~~
14 ~~the custody of the Commissioner for Children and Families for at least six~~
15 ~~months when that person was between the ages of 16 and 18, and who is~~
16 ~~accepted for degree study at the Vermont State Colleges, the University of~~
17 ~~Vermont, or a Vermont independent college, is eligible for an annual grant~~
18 ~~under this section, to the extent that funds are available in the trust fund if the~~
19 ~~child is:~~

20 (A) under the custody of the Commissioner for Children and
21 Families;

1 (B) a young adult between 18 and 24 years of age who was under the
2 custody of the Commissioner for Children and Families for at least six months
3 when that person was between 16 and 18 years of age; or

4 (C) a young adult between 18 and 24 years of age who was under the
5 permanent guardianship of a relative and received kinship assistance pursuant
6 to 33 V.S.A. § 4903 for at least six months when that person was between 16
7 and 18 years of age.

8 (2) Upon certification by the Vermont State Colleges, the University of
9 Vermont, or a Vermont independent college that a Vermont resident student
10 who is eligible under this section has matriculated in a degree program at a
11 Vermont college or university, the student may receive a grant if the student's
12 financial aid eligibility leaves remaining financial need following the student
13 and the family contributions, if any, and the availability of all other sources of
14 gift aid. Each grant, together with the student and the family contributions, if
15 any, and all other sources of gift aid, shall not exceed the full cost of tuition,
16 fees, room, and board, and no individual annual grant may exceed ~~\$3,000.00~~
17 \$4,000.00. The Board may prorate the funds appropriated for use under this
18 section where the collective need of the eligible applicants exceeds the funds
19 appropriated. In addition, the Board may prorate a grant based on a student's
20 full- or part-time enrollment status.

1 (f) A person may receive a grant under this section for each of up to six
2 consecutive years. A young adult who receives a grant under this section prior
3 to reaching 25 years of age shall continue to be eligible for grants under this
4 section until six years from the date of matriculation or until ~~he or she~~ the
5 person has obtained an undergraduate degree, whichever comes first.

6 (g) The Board shall coordinate implementation of this section with the
7 Commissioner for Children and Families, the President of the Association of
8 Vermont Independent Colleges, the Chancellor of the Vermont State Colleges,
9 and the President of the University of Vermont. The Board may establish
10 procedures and policies or adopt rules to implement this section.

11 Sec. 2. APPROPRIATION; 802 OPPORTUNITY GRANT

12 In fiscal year 2024, \$150,000.00 is appropriated to the Vermont Student
13 Assistance Corporation in addition to the base appropriation for the 802
14 Opportunity Grant established in 16 V.S.A. § 2845.

15 Sec. 3. EFFECTIVE DATE

16 This act shall take effect on July 1, 2023.