ENROLLED

House Bill No. 4534

(By Mr. Speaker, Mr. Kiss, and Delegate Trump)
[By Request of the Executive]

Passed March 9, 2002

In Effect from Passage
AN ACT to amend chapter eighteen-c of the code of West Virginia, one thousand nine hundred thirty-one, as amended, by adding thereto a new article, designated article eight, relating to higher education; student financial aid; creating the West Virginia financial aid coordinating council; membership; responsibility; meetings; recommendations; reports; and termination of council.

Be it enacted by the Legislature of West Virginia:

That chapter eighteen-c of the code of West Virginia, one thousand nine hundred thirty-one, as amended, be amended by adding thereto a new article, designated article eight, to read as follows:

ARTICLE 8. WEST VIRGINIA FINANCIAL AID COORDINATING COUNCIL.

§18C-8-1. West Virginia financial aid coordinating council.

(a) The West Virginia financial aid coordinating council is hereby created. The council is established for the purpose of
(b) The council is responsible for examining financial aid issues which include at least the following:

1. A manner for administering and maintaining the most efficient, simplified and coordinated application process. This includes implementing the optimum use of technology in the application process.

The council shall explore the feasibility of developing a single form for completing the application process;

2. A strategy for ensuring that a reasonable balance of need-based, merit-based and self-help financial assistance is available to West Virginia students;

3. An integrated and well coordinated system for making financial aid awards on a timely basis;

4. A comprehensive informational and marketing plan that delivers to middle school through high school students and the public an awareness of the various financial aid resources;

5. An articulation plan between secondary and postsecondary education regarding delivery and availability of student financial aid, including dual credit course offerings for secondary students free of charge;

6. A strategy for working with and informing high school guidance counselors in implementing effective strategies for assisting students in completing the financial aid application process; and

7. A strategy for implementing a system of student identification numbers that is both compatible and uniform to
be used by public schools and public institutions of higher education.

(c) The council shall take actions including, but not limited to, the following:

(1) Make recommendations with respect to coordinating the application for and disbursement of funds from all sources of a student’s financial aid package, and for maximizing the level of funding derived from federal sources;

(2) Identify and examine all sources of student financial aid, and recommend the most effective manner for coordinating all financial aid resources. The sources include, but are not limited to the following:

(A) PROMISE scholarship program;
(B) Higher education grant program;
(C) Higher education adult part-time student grant program;
(D) Prepaid tuition trust and savings programs;
(E) Underwood-Smith teacher scholarship program;
(F) Health sciences scholarship program;
(G) West Virginia engineering, science and technology scholarship program;
(H) Federal PELL grant program;
(I) Federal student loans;
(J) Work/study programs;
(K) Tuition waivers; and
(L) Privately funded scholarships;

(3) In consultation with the higher education policy commission, recommend funding levels for each state grant and scholarship program;

(4) Utilize the resources of national or regional education organizations such as, but not limited to, the southern regional education board, education commission of the states and national association of student financial aid administrators; and

(5) Meet at any time that the council determines appropriate.

§18C-8-2. Council membership; council chair; compensation of members; establishing quorum.

(a) The council is composed of seventeen members as follows:

(1) Chancellor for higher education, or designee;

(2) State superintendent of schools, or designee;

(3) Secretary of education and the arts, or designee;

(4) State treasurer, or designee;

(5) Vice chancellor for administration for the higher education policy commission;

(6) Director for student and educational services for the higher education policy commission;

(7) Assistant state superintendent for technical and adult education services, or designee;
(8) Executive director of the PROMISE scholarship program;

(9) Director of American education services-West Virginia;

(10) Representative of proprietary institutions selected by the West Virginia association of independent colleges and schools;

(11) Representative of independent institutions selected by the West Virginia independent colleges and universities, inc.;

(12) President of the West Virginia association of student financial aid administrators;

(13) President of the West Virginia counselors association, or designee;

(14) Two representatives of state institutions of higher education appointed by the policy commission, one of whom represents community and technical college education; and

(15) Two members appointed by the governor who are knowledgeable about and representative of the interests of student financial aid applicants.

(b) The secretary of education and the arts or his or her designee is chair of the council.

(c) Members serve without compensation, but are reimbursed for expenses, including travel expenses, actually incurred by the member in the official conduct of business at the same rate as is paid to state employees. Any members employed by a government agency shall be reimbursed by his or her employer; all other members shall be reimbursed by the office of the secretary of education and the arts. A majority of
§18C-8-3. Reports; termination of council.

(a) The council shall make a preliminary report of its recommendations on or before the first day of December, two thousand two. If the council is able to finish its work and make a final report on this date, it shall cease to exist on the first day of April, two thousand three. If the council finds that it can not complete its work on or before the first day of December, two thousand two, the council may vote to continue its work and issue a final report on the first day of December, two thousand three, in which case, the council shall cease to exist on the first day of April, two thousand four.

(b) The council shall provide copies of its reports to the Governor; President of the Senate; Speaker of the House of Delegates; chairs of the Senate and House finance committees; legislative oversight commission on education accountability; higher education policy commission; and state board of education.
That Joint Committee on Enrolled Bills hereby certifies that the foregoing bill is correctly enrolled.

Chairman Senate Committee

Chairman House Committee

Originating in the House.

In effect from passage.

Clerk of the Senate

Clerk of the House of Delegates

President of the Senate

Speaker of the House of Delegates

The within is approved this the 2nd day of April, 2002.

Governor