An Act to Update the Maine State Grant Program

(EMERGENCY)

Submitted by the Finance Authority of Maine pursuant to Joint Rule 204.
Reference to the Committee on Innovation, Development, Economic Advancement and Business suggested and ordered printed.

DAREK M. GRANT
Secretary of the Senate

Presented by Senator DAUGTHRY of Cumberland.
Emergency preamble. Whereas, acts and resolves of the Legislature do not become effective until 90 days after adjournment unless enacted as emergencies; and

Whereas, the federal FAFSA Simplification Act, Public Law 116-260, Sections 701 to 706 (2020) made significant changes to the underlying processes and methodologies for determining federal student aid eligibility; and

Whereas, most of these provisions are scheduled to take effect on July 1, 2023; and

Whereas, the Maine State Grant Program, set forth in the Maine Revised Statutes, Title 20-A, sections 11611 to 11619-A, relies in part on submission of the free application for federal student aid and uses the outdated term "expected family contribution" in determining awards; and

Whereas, if this legislation is not enacted on an emergency basis, the Maine State Grant Program will use an outdated term and risk confusing participants; and

Whereas, in the judgment of the Legislature, these facts create an emergency within the meaning of the Constitution of Maine and require the following legislation as immediately necessary for the preservation of the public peace, health and safety; now, therefore,

Be it enacted by the People of the State of Maine as follows:

Sec. 1. 20-A MRSA §11611, sub-§4, as amended by PL 2001, c. 70, §3, is repealed.

Sec. 2. 20-A MRSA §11611, sub-§7 is enacted to read:

7. Student aid index. "Student aid index" means a calculation that reflects an evaluation of a student's approximate financial resources to contribute toward the student's postsecondary education for an academic year.

Sec. 3. 20-A MRSA §11613, first ¶, as amended by PL 2003, c. 103, §1, is further amended to read:

The authority shall establish the need of a student for a Maine State Grant for an academic year for which the student applies. A student is considered to have a need to qualify for a grant if the total of the cost of attendance of the student, minus the expected family contribution for the student, minus estimated student financial assistance not received under this program, is greater than zero. The total of the expected family contribution, together with any other student financial assistance received by the student, In doing so, the authority shall consider the cost of attendance of the student, the student aid index and estimated student financial assistance not received under this program. The total cost determined by these factors may not exceed the cost of attendance at the institution the student attends.

Sec. 4. 20-A MRSA §11613, sub-§2, as enacted by PL 1989, c. 559, §10, is repealed.

Sec. 5. 20-A MRSA §11614, sub-§1, as amended by PL 2001, c. 70, §8, is further amended to read:
1. **Priority for awards of grants.** Students with the lowest expected family contributions (student aid index) must be given priority over all other eligible students for the awards of grants.

**Emergency clause.** In view of the emergency cited in the preamble, this legislation takes effect when approved.

**SUMMARY**

This bill updates the Maine State Grant Program as a result of recently enacted federal legislation pertaining to free application for federal student aid simplification and associated terminology. It removes the term "expected family contribution" from the governing laws and replaces it with "student aid index."