

MAINE STATE LEGISLATURE

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132nd MAINE LEGISLATURE

FIRST SPECIAL SESSION-2025

Legislative Document

No. 1255

H.P. 830

House of Representatives, March 25, 2025

**An Act to Ensure In-state Tuition for Postsecondary Students Who
Are Registered to Vote in the State and to Amend Eligibility
Requirements for the Free Community College Tuition Program**

Reference to the Committee on Education and Cultural Affairs suggested and ordered printed.

A handwritten signature in black ink, reading "R B. Hunt".

ROBERT B. HUNT
Clerk

Presented by Representative RUDNICKI of Fairfield.

Cosponsored by Representatives: BAGSHAW of Windham, CIMINO of Bridgton, HAGGAN of Hampden, QUINT of Hodgdon, WHITE of Guilford.

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

2 **Sec. 1. 20-A MRSA §10018** is enacted to read:

3 **§10018. In-state tuition for registered voters**

4 A student who is registered to vote in this State is considered to be a resident of this
5 State and is eligible for in-state tuition rates at any postsecondary educational institution in
6 this State that offers an in-state tuition rate.

7 **1. Voting residency qualifications.** A student who is eligible for in-state tuition rates
8 under this section must meet the residency qualifications in Title 21-A, sections 111 and
9 112.

10 **2. Residency.** A student who is eligible for in-state tuition rates under this section
11 may be:

12 A. Considered a permanent resident, as defined in Title 36, section 681, subsection 4,
13 for homestead property tax exemption purposes;

14 B. Considered a resident, as defined in Title 36, section 4062, subsection 6, for estate
15 tax purposes;

16 C. Subject to resident income taxes pursuant to Title 36, chapter 823;

17 D. Considered to be domiciled in the State for probate purposes pursuant to Title 18-C,
18 section 1-301; and

19 E. Eligible to run for state office pursuant to the Constitution of Maine, Article IV,
20 Part First, Section 4; Article IV, Part Second, Section 6; and Article V, Part First,
21 Section 4.

22 Additionally, a family member of a student who is eligible for in-state tuition rates under
23 this section may be eligible for in-state tuition rates at a postsecondary educational
24 institution in this State.

25 **Sec. 2. PL 2023, c. 412, Pt. QQQ, §3** is amended to read:

26 **Sec. QQQ-3. Eligibility and conditions for 2-year free community college**
27 **tuition program.**

28 **1. Eligibility.** For purposes of this Part, an eligible student is:

29 A. A high school graduate in the class of 2020 or 2021 or a person who obtains the
30 equivalent of a high school diploma in 2020 or 2021, who enrolls in a Maine
31 community college no later than during the 2023-2024 academic year;

32 B. A high school graduate in the class of 2022 or a person who obtains the equivalent
33 of a high school diploma in 2022, who enrolls in a Maine community college no later
34 than the 2024-2025 academic year;

35 C. A high school graduate in the class of 2023 or a person who obtains the equivalent
36 of a high school diploma in 2023, who enrolls in a Maine community college no later
37 than the 2025-2026 academic year;

38 D. A high school graduate in the class of 2024 or a person who obtains the equivalent
39 of a high school diploma in 2024, who enrolls in a Maine community college no later
40 than the 2026-2027 academic year; or

1 E. A high school graduate in the class of 2025 or a person who obtains the equivalent
2 of a high school diploma in 2025, who enrolls in a Maine community college no later
3 than the 2027-2028 academic year.

4 **2. Conditions.** In order to receive 2 years of free community college, an eligible
5 student must:

6 A. Pursue an associate degree or academic credential;

7 B. Reside in the State at the time of enrollment in a Maine community college and for
8 the duration of that enrollment;

9 B-1. Reside in the State for at least 2 years prior to enrollment in a Maine community
10 college or be a graduate of a high school in the State;

11 C. Accept all federal and state grants, scholarships and other sources of funding that
12 are available and for which the student has applied and qualified; and

13 D. Complete the program of study within 200% of the stated completion time.

14 SUMMARY

15 This bill provides that a student who is registered to vote in this State is considered to
16 be a resident of this State and is eligible for in-state tuition rates at any postsecondary
17 educational institution in this State that offers an in-state tuition rate. It provides that such
18 a student must meet the voting residency qualifications and that the student may be
19 considered a permanent resident for homestead property tax exemption purposes and a
20 resident for estate tax purposes, subject to resident income taxes and eligible to run for state
21 office. A family member of the student may be eligible for in-state tuition rates at a
22 postsecondary educational institution in the State. The bill also requires a person to be a
23 graduate of a high school in the State or reside in the State for at least 2 years prior to
24 enrollment in a Maine community college in order to be eligible for free tuition in the
25 Maine Community College System.