SYNOPSIS
Increases campus security by allowing institutions of higher education to offer partial tuition credit to police officers enrolled at the institution who agree to be on duty while attending classes.

CURRENT VERSION OF TEXT
As introduced.
AN ACT establishing a tuition credit program for certain police officers and supplementing chapter 71B of Title 18A of the New Jersey Statutes.

BE IT ENACTED by the Senate and General Assembly of the State of New Jersey:

1. As used in this act:
   “Police officer” means any New Jersey resident who is a permanent fulltime active member of any police force or organization of any municipality or county in the State, or the State Police.
   “Program” means the Campus Security Tuition Credit Program established pursuant to this act.

2. There is established a Campus Security Tuition Credit Program. Under the program a police officer admitted to a New Jersey public institution of higher education shall be eligible for a tuition credit of up to 50% of the cost of tuition in exchange for being on duty while attending classes.

3. A person who is a police officer in good standing shall be eligible to receive up to 50% of the tuition normally charged by a public institution of higher education for students attending that institution provided that:
   a. the police officer has been accepted to pursue a course of undergraduate or graduate study at the institution and is enrolled as an undergraduate or graduate student in good standing at the institution;
   b. the police officer has applied for all available State student grants and scholarships and all available federal student grants and scholarships for which the police officer is eligible; and
   c. the police officer enters into an agreement with the institution in which he is enrolled to provide security services to the institution while attending classes. The agreement shall specify the role and the specific duties of the police officer while on duty attending classes on campus, and the total amount of the tuition credit per semester he will receive for participating in the program.

4. Any benefits granted to an eligible police officer pursuant to this act shall not be considered income or an asset in determining financial need for any financial assistance for higher education provided pursuant to Title 18A of the New Jersey Statutes.

5. Notwithstanding the provisions of paragraph (1) of subsection e. of N.J.S.2C:39-5, a police officer participating in the
program who is otherwise legally permitted to carry a firearm shall be permitted to carry the firearm on the campus of the public institution of higher education in which he is enrolled.

6. This act shall take effect immediately.

STATEMENT

This bill establishes a program designed to increase campus security at our public institutions of higher education. Under the Campus Security Tuition Credit Program a police officer admitted to a New Jersey public institution of higher education will be eligible for a tuition credit of up to 50% of the cost of tuition in exchange for being on duty while attending classes. In order to be eligible a person must be a New Jersey resident and a police officer in good standing employed in this State. In addition, the police officer must have been accepted to pursue a course of undergraduate or graduate study at the institution and be enrolled as an undergraduate or graduate student in good standing at the institution. The bill requires that the police officer enter into an agreement with the institution in which he is enrolled to provide security services to the institution while attending classes. The agreement must specify the role and the specific duties of the police officer while on duty attending classes on campus, and the total amount of the tuition credit per semester he will receive for participating in the program.

The bill specifically exempts police officers who are participating in this program from the provisions of paragraph (1) of subsection e. of N.J.S.2C:39-5 which provides that any person who knowingly has in his possession any firearm in or upon any part of the buildings or grounds of any school, college, university or other educational institution, without the written authorization of the governing officer of the institution, is guilty of a crime of the third degree, irrespective of whether the person possesses a valid permit to carry the firearm or a valid firearms purchaser identification card.