

Department of Legislative Services  
Maryland General Assembly  
2026 Session

FISCAL AND POLICY NOTE  
First Reader

Senate Bill 486 (Senator Carozza, *et al.*)  
Education, Energy, and the Environment

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Higher Education - Maryland Graduate and Professional Scholarship Program -  
Eligible Institutions

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This bill expands eligibility for the Maryland Graduate and Professional Scholarship Program to include individuals attending the University of Maryland Eastern Shore enrolled in one of the following degree programs: (1) Master of Medical Science in Physician Assistant Studies; (2) Doctor of Pharmacy; (3) Doctor of Physical Therapy; or (4) Doctor of Veterinary Medicine. **The bill takes effect July 1, 2026.**

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Fiscal Summary

**State Effect:** Expanding eligibility for the Maryland Graduate and Professional Scholarship does not necessitate additional spending, as discussed below. The Maryland Higher Education Commission (MHEC) can make needed administrative changes with existing resources. Revenues are not affected.

**Local Effect:** None.

**Small Business Effect:** None.

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Analysis

**Current Law:** A recipient of a graduate and professional scholarship must be a Maryland resident, demonstrate a financial need, and attend one of several specified graduate and professional schools. Scholarships range from \$1,000 to \$5,000 per school year and may not be received for more than eight semesters.

MHEC must allocate funds from the Graduate and Professional Scholarship Program to institutions of higher education based on the proportion of State residents enrolled in eligible programs at each institution. Institutions then distribute the scholarship funds to eligible students.

**State Expenditures:** Funding for the Graduate and Professional Scholarship Program is as provided in the annual State budget. Therefore, expanding *eligibility* does not necessitate additional spending. The fiscal 2027 budget as introduced includes \$1.2 million in funding for the program. In fiscal 2025, the program made \$282,850 in awards to 213 applicants. MHEC advises that, since funding is allocated to each institution of higher education based on the proportion of State residents enrolled in eligible programs, adding another institution without additional funding will result in decreased funding allocations among currently eligible institutions.

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### **Additional Information**

**Recent Prior Introductions:** Similar legislation has not been introduced within the last three years.

**Designated Cross File:** HB 1075 (Delegate Smith) - Appropriations.

**Information Source(s):** Maryland Higher Education Commission; University System of Maryland; Department of Legislative Services

**Fiscal Note History:** First Reader - March 4, 2026  
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