

110TH CONGRESS
1ST SESSION

S. 2164

To establish a Science and Technology Scholarship Program to award scholarships to recruit and prepare students for careers in the National Weather Service and in National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration marine research, atmospheric research, and satellite programs and for other purposes.

IN THE SENATE OF THE UNITED STATES

OCTOBER 15, 2007

Mr. INHOFE (for himself and Mr. COCHRAN) introduced the following bill; which was read twice and referred to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation

A BILL

To establish a Science and Technology Scholarship Program to award scholarships to recruit and prepare students for careers in the National Weather Service and in National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration marine research, atmospheric research, and satellite programs and for other purposes.

1 *Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representa-*
2 *tives of the United States of America in Congress assembled,*

3 **SECTION 1. SHORT TITLE.**

4 This Act may be cited as the “NOAA Scholarship Act
5 of 2007”.

1 **SEC. 2. SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY SCHOLARSHIP PRO-**
2 **GRAM.**

3 (a) ESTABLISHMENT OF PROGRAM.—

4 (1) IN GENERAL.—The Administrator is au-
5 thorized to establish a Science and Technology
6 Scholarship Program to award scholarships to indi-
7 viduals to recruit and prepare students for careers
8 in the National Weather Service and in Administra-
9 tion marine research, atmospheric research, and sat-
10 ellite programs.

11 (2) COMPETITIVE PROCESS.—Individuals shall
12 be selected to receive scholarships under the scholar-
13 ship program through a competitive process pri-
14 marily on the basis of academic merit, with consider-
15 ation given to financial need and the goal of pro-
16 moting the participation of individuals described in
17 section 33 or 34 of the Science and Engineering
18 Equal Opportunities Act (42 U.S.C. 1885a or
19 1885b) in the scholarship program.

20 (3) SERVICE AGREEMENTS.—To carry out the
21 scholarship program, the Administrator shall enter
22 into contractual agreements with individuals selected
23 under paragraph (2) under which the individuals
24 agree to serve as full-time employees of the Adminis-
25 tration, for the period described in subsection (f)(1),
26 in positions needed by the Administration in fields

1 described in paragraph (1) and for which the indi-
2 viduals are qualified, in exchange for receiving a
3 scholarship.

4 (b) SCHOLARSHIP ELIGIBILITY.—In order to be eligi-
5 ble to participate in the scholarship program, an individual
6 shall—

7 (1) be enrolled or accepted for enrollment as a
8 full-time student at an institution of higher edu-
9 cation in an academic program or field of study de-
10 scribed in the list made available under subsection
11 (d);

12 (2) be a citizen or permanent resident of the
13 United States; and

14 (3) at the time of the initial scholarship award,
15 not be an employee (as that term is defined in sec-
16 tion 2105 of title 5, United States Code) of the
17 United States.

18 (c) APPLICATION REQUIRED.—An individual seeking
19 a scholarship under the scholarship program shall submit
20 an application to the Administrator at such time, in such
21 manner, and containing such information, agreements, or
22 assurances as the Administrator may require to carry out
23 this section.

24 (d) ELIGIBLE ACADEMIC PROGRAMS.—The Adminis-
25 trator shall make publicly available a list of academic pro-

1 grams and fields of study for which scholarships may be
2 utilized in fields described in subsection (a)(1), and shall
3 update the list as necessary.

4 (e) SCHOLARSHIP REQUIREMENT.—

5 (1) IN GENERAL.—The Administrator may pro-
6 vide a scholarship under the scholarship program for
7 an academic year if the individual applying for the
8 scholarship has submitted to the Administrator, as
9 part of the application required under subsection (c),
10 a proposed academic program leading to a degree in
11 a program or field of study on the list made avail-
12 able under subsection (d).

13 (2) DURATION OF ELIGIBILITY.—An individual
14 may not receive a scholarship under the scholarship
15 program for more than 4 academic years, unless the
16 Administrator grants a waiver.

17 (3) SCHOLARSHIP AMOUNT.—The dollar
18 amount of a scholarship under the scholarship pro-
19 gram for an academic year shall be determined
20 under regulations issued by the Administrator, but
21 may not exceed the cost of attendance, as described
22 in paragraph (4).

23 (4) AUTHORIZED USES.—A scholarship pro-
24 vided under the scholarship program may be ex-
25 pended for tuition, fees, and other authorized ex-

1 penses as established by the Administrator by regu-
2 lation.

3 (5) CONTRACTS REGARDING DIRECT PAYMENTS
4 TO INSTITUTIONS.—The Administrator may enter
5 into a contractual agreement with an institution of
6 higher education under which the amounts provided
7 for a scholarship under this section for tuition, fees,
8 and other authorized expenses are paid directly to
9 the institution with respect to which the scholarship
10 is provided.

11 (f) PERIOD OF OBLIGATED SERVICE.—

12 (1) DURATION OF SERVICE.—Except as pro-
13 vided in subsection (h)(2), the period of service for
14 which an individual shall be obligated to serve as an
15 employee of the Administration shall be 24 months
16 for each academic year for which a scholarship
17 under the scholarship program is provided.

18 (2) SCHEDULE FOR SERVICE.—

19 (A) IN GENERAL.—Except as provided in
20 subparagraph (B), obligated service under para-
21 graph (1) shall begin not later than 60 days
22 after the individual obtains the educational de-
23 gree for which the scholarship was provided.

24 (B) DEFERRAL.—The Administrator may
25 defer the obligation of an individual to provide

1 a period of service under paragraph (1) if the
2 Administrator determines that such a deferral
3 is appropriate. The Administrator shall pre-
4 scribe the terms and conditions under which a
5 service obligation may be deferred through reg-
6 ulation.

7 (g) PENALTIES FOR BREACH OF SCHOLARSHIP
8 AGREEMENT.—

9 (1) FAILURE TO COMPLETE ACADEMIC TRAIN-
10 ING.—Scholarship recipients who fail to maintain a
11 high level of academic standing, as defined by the
12 Administrator by regulation, who are dismissed from
13 their educational institutions for disciplinary rea-
14 sons, or who voluntarily terminate academic training
15 before graduation from the educational program for
16 which the scholarship was awarded, shall be in
17 breach of their contractual agreement and, in lieu of
18 any service obligation arising under such agreement,
19 shall be liable to the United States for repayment
20 not later than 1 year after the date of default of all
21 scholarship funds paid to them and to the institution
22 of higher education on their behalf under the agree-
23 ment, except as provided in subsection (h)(2). The
24 repayment period may be extended by the Adminis-

1 trator when determined to be necessary, as estab-
2 lished by regulation.

3 (2) FAILURE TO BEGIN OR COMPLETE THE
4 SERVICE OBLIGATION OR MEET THE TERMS AND
5 CONDITIONS OF DEFERMENT.—Except as provided
6 in subsection (h), an individual who receives a schol-
7 arship under the scholarship program and who, for
8 any reason, fails to begin or complete a service obli-
9 gation under this section after completion of aca-
10 demic training, or fails to comply with the terms and
11 conditions of deferment established by the Adminis-
12 trator pursuant to subsection (f)(2)(B), shall be in
13 breach of the contractual agreement. Such an indi-
14 vidual shall be liable to the United States for an
15 amount equal to—

16 (A) the total amount received by the indi-
17 vidual under the scholarship program; plus

18 (B) the amount of interest that would have
19 been earned on such amount, at the maximum
20 legal prevailing rate as determined by the
21 Treasurer of the United States, during the pe-
22 riod between the date the amount was awarded
23 to the individual and the date of the breach of
24 the agreement.

25 (h) WAIVER OR SUSPENSION OF OBLIGATION.—

1 (1) DEATH OF INDIVIDUAL.—Any obligation of
2 an individual incurred under the scholarship pro-
3 gram (or a contractual agreement thereunder) for
4 service or payment shall be canceled upon the death
5 of the individual.

6 (2) IMPOSSIBILITY OR EXTREME HARDSHIP.—
7 The Administrator shall by regulation provide for
8 the partial or total waiver or suspension of any obli-
9 gation of service or payment incurred by an indi-
10 vidual under the scholarship program (or a contrac-
11 tual agreement thereunder) whenever compliance by
12 the individual is impossible or would involve extreme
13 hardship to the individual, or if enforcement of such
14 obligation with respect to the individual would be
15 contrary to the best interests of the United States.

16 **SEC. 3. DEFINITIONS.**

17 In this Act:

18 (a) ADMINISTRATION.—The term “Administration”
19 means the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administra-
20 tion.

21 (b) ADMINISTRATOR.—The term “Administrator”
22 means the Under Secretary for Oceans and Atmosphere
23 of the Department of Commerce.

1 (c) COST OF ATTENDANCE.—The term “cost of at-
2 tendance” has the meaning given that term in section 472
3 of the Higher Education Act of 1965 (20 U.S.C. 1087ll).

4 (d) INSTITUTION OF HIGHER EDUCATION.—The
5 term “institution of higher education” has the meaning
6 given that term in section 101(a) of the Higher Education
7 Act of 1965 (20 U.S.C. 1001(a)).

8 (e) SCHOLARSHIP PROGRAM.—The term “scholarship
9 program” means the Science and Technology Scholarship
10 Program established under section 2(a).

○