



DOAA

Georgia Department
of Audits & Accounts

Greg S. Griffin
State Auditor

January 2, 2026

Honorable Imani Barnes
State Representative
507-B Coverdell Legislative Office Bldg.
Atlanta, Georgia 30334

SUBJECT: Fiscal Note
House Bill 867 (LC 61 0228)

Dear Representative Barnes:

This bill would require the Georgia Student Finance Commission to establish a pilot financial aid program to provide grants for eligible students to assist with the cost of attending approved school trade programs, including schools of barbering, cosmetology, esthetics, hair design, and nail care. The bill limits total grant allocations to \$50,000 per year, while individual awards are capped at \$10,000 per recipient.

Under the bill, eligible students must be enrolled or accepted for enrollment at an approved school. Currently, 107 schools are licensed by the Secretary of State that could potentially meet requirements to be an approved school.

Students at the Technical College System of Georgia (TCSG) will not be eligible for grants under this pilot program. Although TCSG institutions offer similar programs of barbering, cosmetology, esthetics, hair design and nail care, they do not meet the requirements of an approved school as defined by the bill. It should be noted, however, that students enrolled in TCSG programs can use HOPE grant awards to assist with the cost of attendance if eligible under requirements of the grant. According to the Georgia Student Finance Commission (GSFC), 4,254 students received the HOPE Grant or Zell Miller Grant for one of these programs in fiscal year 2025, totaling \$7.3 million in grant awards.

GSFC estimated it would cost approximately \$29,300 to administer the pilot program (based on 0.25 FTE at the average salary and benefits rate of current staff). The estimate assumes total grant awards remain capped at \$50,000 per year, though GSFC expects a significant increase in workload due to large number of inquiries and payment requests by approved schools.

Respectfully,

Greg S. Griffin
State Auditor

Richard Dunn, Director
Office of Planning and Budget

GSG/RD/pj