

# SENATE BILL NO. 1612

103RD GENERAL ASSEMBLY

INTRODUCED BY SENATOR WASHINGTON.

5653S.011

KRISTINA MARTIN, Secretary

## AN ACT

To amend chapter 173, RSMo, by adding thereto one new section relating to liaisons for vulnerable students at public institutions of higher education.

*Be it enacted by the General Assembly of the State of Missouri, as follows:*

Section A. Chapter 173, RSMo, is amended by adding thereto one new section, to be known as section 173.2542, to read as follows:

173.2542. 1. This section shall be known and may be cited as the "Success for Homeless and Foster Youth in Higher Education Act".

2. As used in this section, the following terms mean:

(1) "Foster youth", any individual in the care, custody, or guardianship of the children's division of the department of social services in the foster care program for any six of the seventy-two months immediately prior to such individual's eighteenth birthday;

(2) "Homeless youth", any individual under twenty-five years of age who has been verified, at any time during the six years prior to such individual's enrollment in an institution, as a homeless child or youth as defined in 42 U.S.C. Section 11434a(2) by at least one of the following:

(a) A governmental or nonprofit agency that receives federal, state, or municipal funding to provide services to

homeless persons or that is otherwise sanctioned to provide these services by a homeless continuum of care organization;

(b) An attorney appointed by the court to represent the youth;

(c) A local education agency liaison for homeless children and youth designated as such pursuant to 42 U.S.C. Section 11432(g)(1)(J)(ii) or a school social worker;

(d) A human services provider or public social services provider funded by the state to provide services for homeless children and youth, including health services, mental or behavioral health services, substance use disorder services, or public assistance or employment services;

(e) A law enforcement officer designated as a liaison to the homeless population by a law enforcement agency or department within the state;

(f) The director of a federal TRIO program or his designee;

(g) A court-appointed special advocate (CASA) employee or volunteer;

(h) A financial aid administrator;

(i) An admissions counselor;

(3) "Institution", a public institution of higher education that is subject to the coordinating board for higher education under section 173.005.

3. Each institution shall designate a homeless and foster student liaison within such institution's financial aid office. The liaison shall be responsible for applying the provisions of the federal Higher Education Act as set forth in 20 U.S.C. Section 1070, et seq., pertaining to the independent student status and financial aid eligibility of current and former homeless youth and foster youth, and shall assist these students, both current and prospective,

49 in applying for federal and state financial aid and other  
50 assistance for which they may be eligible.

51 4. Notwithstanding any provision of law to the  
52 contrary, an institution may grant resident status to a  
53 student who resides in Missouri and is nineteen years of age  
54 or under at the time of enrollment, regardless of how long  
55 such student has resided in the state, if such student is  
56 determined to have been homeless at any time during the two  
57 years immediately preceding such student's enrollment.

58 5. In order to ensure that current and former homeless  
59 youth and foster youth have access to stable housing, an  
60 institution that offers student housing may develop a plan  
61 to provide that students who are homeless youth or foster  
62 youth have access to housing resources as needed during and  
63 between academic terms. The plan may grant such students  
64 first priority for housing placement and provide that they  
65 be placed in the institution's housing facility that remains  
66 open for occupation during the most days in a calendar year.

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