
Higher Education Committee

HB 2503

Brief Description: Requiring institutions of higher education to provide early registration for eligible veterans and national guard members.

Sponsors: Representatives Hansen, McCoy, Moscoso, Appleton, Kelley, Springer, Green, Van De Wege, Finn, Hudgins and Maxwell.

<p>Brief Summary of Bill</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Requires institutions of higher education to have a process in place to offer students who are eligible veterans or National Guard members early registration.
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Hearing Date:

Staff: Madeleine Thompson (786-7304).

Background:

According to the Washington Department of Veterans Affairs, one in nine Washington residents is a veteran.

Institutions of higher education provide a variety of benefits for veterans and their families pursuing higher education. State law permits that within state-supported waiver authority, institutions of higher education may waive all or a portion of tuition and fees for:

- an eligible veteran or National Guard member;
- the child or spouse of an eligible veteran or National Guard member who was totally disabled in the line of duty, or who is listed as missing in action or a prisoner of war; and
- the surviving child or spouse of an eligible veteran or National Guard member killed in the line of duty. Upon remarriage, however, the surviving spouse no longer is eligible for a waiver.

This analysis was prepared by non-partisan legislative staff for the use of legislative members in their deliberations. This analysis is not a part of the legislation nor does it constitute a statement of legislative intent.

Institutions of higher education also may waive all or a portion of tuition and fees for a military or naval veteran who did not serve in active federal service abroad or in support of those serving abroad and who does not qualify as an eligible veteran or National Guard member.

In addition to tuition waivers, higher education institutions provide other benefits to veterans pursuing higher education. One example is the Vet Corps Navigator program funded by the federal program, AmeriCorps. The purpose of Vet Corps Navigators is to help veterans achieve their higher education goals. Navigators provide connections with federal, state, or local veterans benefits and financial aid programs and help them adjust to college life. There are Vet Corps Navigators stationed at 17 community and technical colleges, five public baccalaureate institutions, and Pacific Lutheran University.

Summary of Bill:

Beginning in the academic year 2012-13, institutions of higher education are required to have a process in place to offer students who are eligible veterans or National Guard members early registration as follows:

- New students who are eligible veterans or National Guard members must be offered an early registration period; and
- Continuing students who are eligible veterans or National Guard members must be offered early registration according to institutional policies.

In order to be eligible, veterans or National Guard members must be a Washington domiciliary who was an active or reserve member of the United States military or naval forces, or a National Guard member called to active duty, who served in active federal service under either Title 10 or Title 32 of the United States Code, in a war or conflict fought on foreign soil or in international waters, or in another location in support of those serving on foreign soil or in international waters, and if discharged from service, has received an honorable discharge.

Appropriation: None.

Fiscal Note: Not requested.

Effective Date: The bill takes effect 90 days after adjournment of the session in which the bill is passed.