
Higher Education Committee

HB 1052

Brief Description: Requiring institutions of higher education to make an early registration process available to spouses and domestic partners of active members of the military.

Sponsors: Representatives Hayes, Fey, Klippert, Orwall, Appleton, Muri, MacEwen, Gregerson, Haler, Bergquist, Moeller, Riccelli and Magendanz.

<p style="text-align: center;">Brief Summary of Bill</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Requires the early course registration process that is available for eligible veterans and national guard members to be offered to spouses and domestic partners of active duty military members.

Hearing Date: 1/28/15

Staff: Megan Mulvihill (786-7304).

Background:

Early Course Registration.

At public institutions of higher education, student course registration order is usually based on the number of credits a student has been awarded by the attending institution, sometimes referred to as "class standing." Priority registration varies depending on each institution's policy, and some institutions do not offer priority registration.

Institutions that offer an early course registration period for any segment of the student population must also have a process in place to offer students who are eligible veterans or national guard members early course registration. Eligible veterans and national guard members who are:

- new students and have completed all of their admission processes must be offered an early course registration period; and

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- continuing and returning former students who have met enrollment requirements must be offered early course registration among continuing students with the same level of class standing or credit as determined by the attending institution and the institutional policies.

In order to be eligible, a veteran or National Guard member must be residing in Washington and have been 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, 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 who, if discharged from service, has received an honorable discharge.

Veterans in Higher Education.

During the 2013-14 academic year, public baccalaureate institutions in Washington served just under 3,000 veterans. In fiscal year 2014, the community and technical colleges served just over 18,000 veterans and almost 4,000 dependents. 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; or
- the surviving child or spouse of an eligible veteran or National Guard member killed in the line of duty; however, upon remarriage the surviving spouse no longer is eligible for a waiver.

Summary of Bill:

The early course registration process available for eligible veterans and national guard members must be offered to spouses of active duty military members who reside in Washington. An active duty military member is defined as a person in the United States active military forces or reserve components who, while serving 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.

A member of the Washington National Guard qualifies as active duty military while serving under federal active duty military service or active state service for a period exceeding thirty days.

The provisions expire August 1, 2022.

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.