

HOUSE BILL REPORT

HB 2542

As Reported by House Committee On:
College & Workforce Development

Title: An act relating to tuition waivers for children of eligible veterans.

Brief Description: Concerning tuition waivers for children of eligible veterans.

Sponsors: Representatives Paul, Dufault, Kilduff, Leavitt, Peterson, Graham, Smith, Volz, Ormsby and Shea.

Brief History:

Committee Activity:

College & Workforce Development: 1/22/20, 1/29/20 [DP].

Brief Summary of Bill

- Provides children of certain veterans eight years from the date of the veteran's disability determination to use the tuition waiver for veterans and National Guard members, if the determination of disability occurs after the child turns 18 years old.

HOUSE COMMITTEE ON COLLEGE & WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT

Majority Report: Do pass. Signed by 16 members: Representatives Hansen, Chair; Entenman, Vice Chair; Leavitt, Vice Chair; Van Werven, Ranking Minority Member; Gildon, Assistant Ranking Minority Member; Graham, Assistant Ranking Minority Member; Bergquist, Kraft, Mead, Paul, Pollet, Ramos, Sells, Slatter, Sutherland and Young.

Minority Report: Without recommendation. Signed by 1 member: Representative Rude.

Staff: Elizabeth Allison (786-7129).

Background:

Tuition Waiver.

Institutions of higher education (institutions) may waive all or a portion of tuition and fees for eligible veterans and National Guard members. An eligible veteran or National Guard

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member is 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 on foreign soil or in international waters, or in support of those serving on foreign soil or in international waters, and if discharged from service, has received an honorable discharge or any other discharge if the sole reason for discharge is due to gender or sexuality.

Institutions must waive all tuition and fees for the children and spouse or surviving spouse of an eligible veteran or National Guard member who became totally disabled from serving in active federal military or naval service, or who is determined by the federal government to be a prisoner of war or missing in action, or who lost his or her life as a result of serving in active federal military or naval service. For a child to receive the tuition waiver, the child must be a Washington domiciliary between the ages of 17 and 26.

Summary of Bill:

A child eligible for the tuition waiver based on a parent's total disability has eight years from the date of the parent's disability determination to use the tuition waiver if the determination of disability occurs after the child turns 18 years old.

Appropriation: None.

Fiscal Note: Requested on January 15, 2020.

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

Staff Summary of Public Testimony:

(In support) State law already provides waivers for service members, and children can receive the waiver up to age 26. The process for disability determination can take years, and some children who would have been eligible for the waiver age out because the process took so long. Children of disabled veterans are often caregivers to their disabled parents, and the waiver allows these children to be able to go to college and become employed to continue to support their parents. The bill makes sense, although increasing tuition will add to lack of collection for tuition revenue at the community and technical colleges.

(Opposed) None.

Persons Testifying: Representative Paul, prime sponsor; and Scott Copeland, State Board for Community and Technical Colleges.

Persons Signed In To Testify But Not Testifying: None.