

1 **H. B. 2769**

2
3 (By Delegates Fleischauer, Longstreth,
4 Sponaugle, Skinner, Lynch, Tomblin, Iaquina,
5 Staggers, Ireland, Diserio and Barill)

6 [Introduced March 1, 2013; referred to the
7 Committee on Veterans' Affairs and Homeland Security then
8 Education.]

**FISCAL
NOTE**

9
10 A BILL to amend and reenact §18B-4-9 of the Code of West Virginia,
11 1931, as amended, relating to requiring state institutions of
12 higher education to give priority registration to veterans and
13 encourage the establishment of resource centers.

14 *Be it enacted by the Legislature of West Virginia:*

15 That §18B-4-9 of the Code of West Virginia, 1931, as amended,
16 be amended and reenacted to read as follows:

17 **ARTICLE 4. GENERAL ADMINISTRATION.**

18 **§18B-4-9. Development of services and facilities for student**
19 **veterans.**

20 (a) *Legislative findings.* -- The Legislature finds that
21 veterans of the Armed Forces of the United States that attend
22 institutions of higher education in this state have many unique
23 needs, issues and concerns that most traditional students do not
24 have. ~~Student veterans that are returning to fulfill their needs~~

1 ~~for higher education who have been or during their pursuit of~~
2 ~~higher education may be deployed to active duty often face unique~~
3 ~~issues and concerns that are unprecedented and unique to the~~
4 ~~current generation of veterans of the post 9/11 era of service in~~
5 ~~the Armed Forces.~~ Many of these veterans have had or will be
6 subject to multiple deployments to active duty, including overseas
7 deployment, resulting in ~~many unique issues and challenges in~~ to
8 their pursuit of higher education.

9 (b) *Legislative intent.* -- It is the intent of the Legislature
10 that state institutions of higher education provide adequate
11 services and facilities for student veterans in order to better
12 serve their ~~unique issues and~~ needs and to make West Virginia's
13 state institutions of higher education veteran-friendly.

14 (c) The commission and council each shall establish and
15 implement measures in the state institutions of higher education
16 under their respective jurisdictions to assure that veterans
17 enrolled in the institutions receive services and are provided
18 facilities appropriate for their ~~unique~~ needs, that student
19 veterans complete programs of study and earn degrees, and that the
20 institutions become veteran-friendly by actively and effectively
21 providing academic and social support and assistance to student
22 veterans. The measures shall include, but are not limited to, the
23 following:

24 (1) Establishing veteran-friendly community and technical

1 college degree programs which recognize and award academic credit
2 toward degrees for various types of technical and vocational
3 military training and experience;

4 (2) Developing policies for each state institutions of higher
5 education to grant academic credit for Armed Forces experiences;

6 (3) Developing programs to facilitate student veterans in
7 sharing their unique knowledge and experience in the military
8 through public school programs and local community organizations;

9 (4) Establishing and sponsoring an organization for student
10 veterans on campus and encouraging other veteran-friendly
11 organizations;

12 (5) Appointing and training specific faculty within each
13 degree program or major as liaisons and contacts for student
14 veterans;

15 (6) Providing information about the Regents Bachelor of Arts
16 Degree program to student veterans and potential student veterans;

17 (7) Coordinating existing disability services on campus with
18 veteran disability services available from the United States
19 Department of Veterans Affairs, other federal and state agencies,
20 and private resources;

21 (8) Providing ~~counselors on each campus~~ veteran's resource
22 centers that house all veteran services and programs in one
23 location, including financial and psychological counselors who are
24 trained to effectively respond to the unique needs of veterans and

1 to provide services or ~~provide~~ referrals to services to fulfill
2 these needs for student veterans;

3 (9) Developing training materials on responding to student
4 veteran needs to be available for continued professional
5 development of counselors to student veterans;

6 (10) Facilitating regular statewide meetings for all personnel
7 at state institutions of higher education who regularly provide
8 specific services to student veterans to discuss and develop best
9 practices, exchange ideas and experiences, and hear presentations
10 by individuals with generally accepted expertise in areas of the
11 various needs of student veterans;

12 (11) Establishing a procedure to periodically apprise
13 appropriate state and federal agencies of the status of student
14 veterans in West Virginia;

15 (12) Establishing a program to create a collaborative
16 relationship between student veterans and alumni of the
17 institution, and with prospective employers to facilitate and
18 provide employment as well as social opportunities to graduating
19 student veterans; ~~and~~

20 (13) Developing and facilitating communications between state
21 institutions of higher education and various veteran organizations
22 in the state to advance veteran causes that benefit student
23 veterans; and

24 (14) Giving priority registration to veterans.

1 (d) The commission and council jointly shall submit a report
2 to the Legislature on September 1, annually, on the progress toward
3 implementing the provisions of this section.

NOTE: The purpose of this bill is to give priority registration to veterans at state institutions of higher education and encourage the establishment of resource centers.

Strike-throughs indicate language that would be stricken from the present law, and underscoring indicates new language that would be added.