

HOUSE BILL NO. 1890

AMENDMENT IN THE NATURE OF A SUBSTITUTE

(Proposed by the House Committee on Education

on _____)

(Patron Prior to Substitute--Delegate Tata)

A BILL to amend the Code of Virginia by adding in Subtitle I of Title 23.1 a chapter numbered 3.1, containing articles numbered 1, 2, and 3, consisting of sections numbered 23.1-311 through 23.1-315, relating to public institutions of higher education; veterans of the uniformed services; data; guaranteed admissions for eligible veteran applicants.

Be it enacted by the General Assembly of Virginia:

1. That the Code of Virginia is amended by adding in Subtitle I of Title 23.1 a chapter numbered 3.1, containing articles numbered 1, 2, and 3, consisting of sections numbered 23.1-311 through 23.1-315, as follows:

CHAPTER 3.1.

VIRGINIA PROMISE TO VETERANS; REPORTING; GUARANTEED ADMISSION.

Article 1.

Definitions and Purpose.

§ 23.1-311. Definitions.

As used in this chapter, unless the context requires a different meaning:

"Eligible veteran applicant" means any individual applying for admission to any public institution of higher education in the Commonwealth who (i) is a veteran member of the uniformed services, (ii) is permanently and totally disabled as a result of his active duty service in the uniformed services, and (iii) (a) graduated from a high school in the Commonwealth or (b) graduated from a high school in a state other than the Commonwealth and served in the uniformed services while assigned to a location in the Commonwealth.

"High school" means any public or private secondary school for grades nine through 12.

27 "Uniformed services" means the United States Armed Forces, including the Army, Navy, Air
28 Force, Marine Corps, and Coast Guard; National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration Commissioned
29 Officer Corps; the commissioned corps of the U.S. Public Health Service; and the Virginia National
30 Guard.

31 "Veteran" or "veteran member of the uniformed services" means any individual who served in the
32 uniformed services and was discharged or released from such service under conditions other than
33 dishonorable.

34 **§ 23.1-312. Purpose.**

35 The purpose of this chapter is to remove barriers to higher education for veteran members of the
36 uniformed services and help assist such veterans in making the transition to civilian life in the
37 Commonwealth.

38 Article 2.

39 Reporting.

40 **§ 23.1-313. Public institutions of higher education; reporting.**

41 A. The governing board of each public institution of higher education shall post on such
42 institution's official website information about the guaranteed acceptance policy for eligible veteran
43 applicants developed pursuant to the provisions of this chapter, including:

- 44 1. A general description of this chapter;
- 45 2. Information on the application requirements and applicable deadlines for such institution; and
- 46 3. Any additional resources or assistance programs available to eligible veteran applicants,
47 including any programs or grants relating to application or tuition fees.

48 B. Each public institution of higher education shall submit an annual report to the General
49 Assembly on or before December 31 of each year detailing the following information pursuant to this
50 chapter:

- 51 1. The number of eligible veteran applicants who applied to such institution;
- 52 2. The number of eligible veteran applicants who enrolled at such institution;

- 53 3. The amount of any application fees waived for eligible veteran applicants at such institution;
- 54 and
- 55 4. Any additional support, service, or assistance provided to participating eligible veteran
- 56 applicants who enrolled at such institution.

Article 3.

Guaranteed Admission for Eligible Veteran Applicants.

§ 23.1-314. Admission of eligible veteran applicants guaranteed; criteria; process.

60 A. Each public institution of higher education in the Commonwealth shall, upon application,
61 accept for admission to such institution any eligible veteran applicant who otherwise meets the admissions
62 requirements to enroll as an undergraduate student.

63 B. The Council, in collaboration with the System, shall develop guidelines for the governing board
64 of each public institution of higher education relating to the administration of the provisions of this article.

65 C. The Council, in collaboration with the System, shall develop guidelines for potential eligible
66 veteran applicants providing information on this article and any additional resources available to eligible
67 veteran applicants for further guidance on the application process at any public institution of higher
68 education.

§ 23.1-315. Construction.

70 A. Except as it relates to the admission of eligible veteran applicants, nothing in this article shall
71 be construed to change any policy or practice of any public institution of higher education, including any
72 additional admissions criteria or prioritization for capped enrollment academic programs.

73 B. The provisions of this article shall be construed in a manner consistent with applicable state and
74 federal law.

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