

AN ACT

relating to higher education for certain military personnel and their dependents.

BE IT ENACTED BY THE LEGISLATURE OF THE STATE OF TEXAS:

SECTION 1. This Act shall be known as Andrew's Law.

SECTION 2. Subchapter W, Chapter 51, Education Code, is amended by adding Section 51.844 to read as follows:

Sec. 51.844. READMISSION OF CERTAIN MILITARY PERSONNEL TO GRADUATE AND PROFESSIONAL PROGRAMS. (a) This section applies only to a person who:

(1) was previously offered admission to, or was enrolled in, a graduate program or professional program at a general academic teaching institution or medical and dental unit;

(2) did not initially enroll in the program, or withdrew from the program, as applicable, because of the person's deployment as a member of the armed forces of the United States serving on active duty for the purpose of engaging in a combative military operation outside the United States; and

(3) seeks readmission to the program following the person's military deployment under Subdivision (2).

(b) A general academic teaching institution or a medical and dental unit must, regardless of the time since the person was initially offered admission to, or withdrew from, the program, as applicable:

1 (1) readmit a person to whom this section applies to
2 the applicable graduate or professional program;

3 (2) apply credit toward the program for any course
4 work previously completed by the person under the program; and

5 (3) accept a standardized test score previously
6 submitted by that person for admission to the program.

7 SECTION 3. Subchapter D, Chapter 54, Education Code, is
8 amended by adding Section 54.3411 to read as follows:

9 Sec. 54.3411. STUDY REGARDING TUITION AND FEE EXEMPTIONS
10 FOR CERTAIN MILITARY PERSONNEL AND DEPENDENTS. (a) The
11 Legislative Budget Board, in consultation with the Texas Higher
12 Education Coordinating Board and the Texas Veterans Commission,
13 shall study and evaluate federal education benefits and the tuition
14 and fee exemptions provided under Section 54.341. In the study, the
15 Legislative Budget Board shall consider any available historical
16 data and the projected data regarding recipients of the exemptions
17 provided under Section 54.341, disaggregated by veteran,
18 dependent, spouse, and legacy recipient, for each of the following
19 categories of information:

20 (1) the total number of recipients, disaggregated by
21 gender, race and ethnicity, institution, and socioeconomic
22 background as indicated in the Free Application for Federal Student
23 Aid (FAFSA);

24 (2) the number of undergraduate, graduate, and
25 doctoral credit hours attempted and earned by semester;

26 (3) the number of degrees attempted and earned, and
27 the associated semester credit hours required for those degrees,

1 per recipient;

2 (4) the grade point average of recipients after
3 completing the first, second, third, and fourth academic years, and
4 subsequent academic years, as applicable, and to the extent allowed
5 under the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act of 1974 (20
6 U.S.C. Section 1232g);

7 (5) the average time to graduation;

8 (6) the four-year and six-year graduation rates,
9 retention rates, and noncompletion rates;

10 (7) the number of semester credit hours of
11 developmental education courses attempted and earned by
12 recipients;

13 (8) the proportion of federal education benefits,
14 including veteran and non-veteran benefits, and of the exemption
15 provided under Section 54.341, used for undergraduate, graduate,
16 and doctoral semester credit hours attempted and earned by
17 recipients; and

18 (9) the average cost of tuition and mandatory fees for
19 an undergraduate, graduate, and doctoral recipient enrolled in a
20 full course load at an institution of higher education compared to
21 the average cost for a nonrecipient student enrolled in a full
22 course load at the same institution for the same degree level.

23 (b) To the greatest extent possible:

24 (1) the Legislative Budget Board shall:

25 (A) include in its study a review of all federal
26 education benefits for veterans in order to comprehensively review
27 the sustainability of state and federal benefits for veterans; and

1 (B) use applicable data from the 2008-2009
2 academic year or a more recent academic year as a baseline in the
3 study; and

4 (2) institutions of higher education shall cooperate
5 with the Legislative Budget Board by providing any requested data
6 and ensuring the reliability and validity of the data collected and
7 submitted for the purpose of the study.

8 (c) Not later than December 1, 2014, the Legislative Budget
9 Board shall submit to the Texas Higher Education Coordinating
10 Board, the Texas Veterans Commission, the governor, the lieutenant
11 governor, and the speaker of the house of representatives a written
12 report of the results of the study conducted under this section,
13 together with any recommendations for legislative or
14 administrative action, including any changes to eligibility
15 criteria or other changes necessary to promote sustainability,
16 fiscal efficiency, and effectiveness in the use of the exemption
17 provided under Section 54.341. A recommendation included in the
18 report must include an explanation of the basis for that
19 recommendation.

20 (d) This section expires January 31, 2015.

21 SECTION 4. This Act takes effect immediately if it receives
22 a vote of two-thirds of all the members elected to each house, as
23 provided by Section 39, Article III, Texas Constitution. If this
24 Act does not receive the vote necessary for immediate effect, this
25 Act takes effect September 1, 2013.

President of the Senate

Speaker of the House

I hereby certify that S.B. No. 1159 passed the Senate on April 18, 2013, by the following vote: Yeas 31, Nays 0; and that the Senate concurred in House amendments on May 25, 2013, by the following vote: Yeas 30, Nays 0.

Secretary of the Senate

I hereby certify that S.B. No. 1159 passed the House, with amendments, on May 22, 2013, by the following vote: Yeas 148, Nays 0, two present not voting.

Chief Clerk of the House

Approved:

Date

Governor