

By: Martinez

H.B. No. 2875

A BILL TO BE ENTITLED

AN ACT

relating to state-supported education and health care benefits for certain military personnel and their dependents.

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

SECTION 1. Section 54.341(a), Education Code, is amended to read as follows:

(a) The governing board of each institution of higher education shall exempt the following persons from the payment of tuition, dues, fees, and other required charges, including fees for correspondence courses but excluding general deposit fees, student services fees, and any fees or charges for lodging, board, or clothing, provided the person seeking the exemption currently resides in this state and has established a domicile, as defined by Section 54.0501, in this state [~~entered the service at a location in this state, declared this state as the person's home of record in the manner provided by the applicable military or other service, or would have been determined to be a resident of this state for purposes of Subchapter B at the time the person entered the service~~]:

(1) all nurses and honorably discharged members of the armed forces of the United States who served during the Spanish-American War or during World War I;

(2) all nurses, members of the Women's Army Auxiliary Corps, members of the Women's Auxiliary Volunteer Emergency

1 Service, and all honorably discharged members of the armed forces
2 of the United States who served during World War II except those who
3 were discharged from service because they were over the age of 38 or
4 because of a personal request on the part of the person that the
5 person be discharged from service;

6 (3) all honorably discharged men and women of the
7 armed forces of the United States who served during the national
8 emergency which began on June 27, 1950, and which is referred to as
9 the Korean War; and

10 (4) all persons who were honorably discharged from the
11 armed forces of the United States after serving on active military
12 duty, excluding training, for more than 180 days and who served a
13 portion of their active duty during:

14 (A) the Cold War which began on the date of the
15 termination of the national emergency cited in Subdivision (3);

16 (B) the Vietnam era which began on December 21,
17 1961, and ended on May 7, 1975;

18 (C) the Grenada and Lebanon era which began on
19 August 24, 1982, and ended on July 31, 1984;

20 (D) the Panama era which began on December 20,
21 1989, and ended on January 21, 1990;

22 (E) the Persian Gulf War which began on August 2,
23 1990, and ends on the date thereafter prescribed by Presidential
24 proclamation or September 1, 1997, whichever occurs first;

25 (F) the national emergency by reason of certain
26 terrorist attacks that began on September 11, 2001; or

27 (G) any future national emergency declared in

1 accordance with federal law.

2 SECTION 2. Subchapter A, Chapter 434, Government Code, is
3 amended by adding Section 434.0191 to read as follows:

4 Sec. 434.0191. FREE HEALTH CARE SERVICES FOR VETERANS AND
5 DEPENDENTS. The Texas Veterans Commission, in cooperation with the
6 Health and Human Services Commission and the board of regents of The
7 University of Texas System, shall ensure that a person who is
8 eligible for an exemption from tuition and fees under Section
9 51.341(a), (a-2), or (b) and who resides in the Rio Grande Valley
10 region of this state is eligible to receive health care services at
11 no cost at a simulation teaching hospital in the Rio Grande Valley
12 associated with The University of Texas System.

13 SECTION 3. The changes in law made by this Act to Section
14 54.341(a), Education Code, apply beginning with tuition and fees
15 charged for the 2015 fall semester. Tuition and fees charged for a
16 term or semester before the 2015 fall semester are governed by the
17 law in effect immediately before the effective date of this Act, and
18 the former law is continued in effect for that purpose.

19 SECTION 4. This Act takes effect immediately if it receives
20 a vote of two-thirds of all the members elected to each house, as
21 provided by Section 39, Article III, Texas Constitution. If this
22 Act does not receive the vote necessary for immediate effect, this
23 Act takes effect September 1, 2015.