

SENATE BILL NO. 1048

103RD GENERAL ASSEMBLY

INTRODUCED BY SENATOR FITZWATER.

4501S.011

KRISTINA MARTIN, Secretary

AN ACT

To amend chapter 173, RSMo, by adding thereto one new section relating to college tuition for dependents of certain veterans.

Be it enacted by the General Assembly of the State of Missouri, as follows:

Section A. Chapter 173, RSMo, is amended by adding thereto
2 one new section, to be known as section 173.237, to read as
3 follows:

173.237. 1. This section shall be known and may be
2 cited as the "Missouri Disabled Veterans' Dependents Tuition
3 Waiver".

4 2. As used in this section, the following terms mean:

5 (1) "Board", the coordinating board for higher
6 education;

7 (2) "Institution", any approved public institution, as
8 defined in subdivision (3) of subsection 1 of section
9 173.1102;

10 (3) "Tuition", any tuition or incidental fee, or both,
11 charged by an institution for attendance at the institution
12 by a student as a resident of this state, but not to exceed
13 the amount of tuition charged to a Missouri resident at the
14 University of Missouri-Columbia for attendance;

15 (4) "Tuition waiver" or "waiver", a tuition waiver
16 granted pursuant to the provisions of this section.

17 3. A dependent of a veteran shall be eligible for a
18 waiver of all tuition remaining due to an institution after
19 subtracting awarded federal financial aid grants and state
20 scholarships and grants if the dependent meets the following
21 requirements:

22 (1) The dependent is a resident of this state who
23 meets the institution's requirements for establishing
24 Missouri residency for the purpose of paying in-state
25 tuition;

26 (2) The dependent has a parent, stepparent, or spouse
27 who is or was a member of the armed forces of the United
28 States who:

29 (a) Died while on active duty;

30 (b) Died of a service-connected disability;

31 (c) Died subsequent to discharge from the armed forces
32 as a result of injury or illness sustained while serving as
33 a member of the armed forces, whether or not the injury or
34 illness resulted in total disability;

35 (d) Is rated as permanently and totally disabled as a
36 result of military service as certified by the United States
37 Department of Veterans Affairs, excluding temporary total
38 disability ratings or other temporary disability ratings
39 given for conditions expected to improve, but including
40 ratings for total disability based on individual
41 unemployability if the unemployability is permanent; or

42 (e) Is classified as missing in action or as a
43 prisoner of war during armed hostilities while serving as a
44 member of the armed forces; and

45 (3) If the dependent is a child or stepchild of a
46 veteran described in subdivision (2) of this subsection,
47 such dependent shall be under twenty-six years of age,
48 unless the dependent serves on active duty with the armed

49 forces of the United States after such dependent's
50 eighteenth birthday but before such dependent's twenty-sixth
51 birthday, in which case the eligibility period shall end
52 five years after the date of the dependent's first discharge
53 or release from duty from the armed forces, but in no event
54 shall such eligibility period be extended beyond the
55 dependent's thirty-first birthday.

56 4. An application for a tuition waiver shall be
57 submitted on a form to be prescribed by the executive
58 director of the Missouri veterans commission. The executive
59 director shall ensure that the application process is
60 accessible, transparent, and efficiently administered.

61 5. The executive director of the Missouri veterans
62 commission or the executive director's designee shall:

63 (1) Establish application procedures by prescribing
64 and providing all necessary forms, setting application
65 deadlines, and determining required documentation for
66 dependents of disabled veterans to apply for the tuition
67 waiver;

68 (2) Review and determine applicant eligibility, verify
69 documentation, and certify approved applicants. Upon
70 certification, the executive director shall notify the
71 applicant and the institution in which the applicant desires
72 to enroll. The executive director's decision shall be final
73 and binding, absent fraud or misrepresentation;

74 (3) Promulgate necessary rules and regulations to
75 ensure effective administration of this section, including
76 procedures for eligibility verification, fraud prevention,
77 and program oversight;

78 (4) Coordinate with the board to facilitate
79 communication with institutions, ensure proper

80 implementation of waivers, and maintain program efficiency;
81 and

82 (5) Oversee program compliance and reporting by
83 maintaining records of waiver recipients, monitoring
84 participation, and providing periodic reports to the board.

85 6. The board shall:

86 (1) Ensure consistent implementation of this section
87 across all institutions, including institutional compliance
88 and reporting;

89 (2) Develop and distribute procedures and guidelines
90 for institutions to process tuition waivers, ensuring that
91 certified applicants are enrolled without tuition charges;
92 and

93 (3) Coordinate with the Missouri veterans commission
94 to ensure seamless communication between certifying
95 authorities and institutions, preventing administrative
96 delays for eligible applicants.

97 7. The waiver shall be valid for one degree, diploma,
98 or certificate from a community college and one
99 baccalaureate degree from a state college or university.
100 Receipt of such degree, diploma, or certificate from a
101 community college shall precede receipt of such
102 baccalaureate degree.

103 8. (1) A recipient of a tuition waiver shall be
104 ineligible for any other state-funded veteran-dependent
105 tuition grant, waiver, or scholarship, including, but not
106 limited to, grants established in sections 173.234 and
107 173.236.

108 (2) A student who has previously received any other
109 state-funded veteran-dependent tuition grant, waiver, or
110 scholarship, including, but not limited to, grants
111 established in sections 173.234 and 173.236, shall not be

112 eligible to receive a tuition waiver pursuant to this
113 section.

114 (3) A student shall not concurrently receive a tuition
115 waiver pursuant to this section and any other state-funded
116 veteran-dependent tuition grant, waiver, or scholarship,
117 including, but not limited to, grants established in
118 sections 173.234 and 173.236, but such student may elect to
119 use the program that provides the greatest financial benefit.

120 9. A recipient of a tuition waiver may transfer from
121 one institution to another without losing such recipient's
122 entitlement to such tuition waiver.

123 10. If a recipient of a tuition waiver is granted
124 financial assistance under any other student aid program,
125 whether public or private, the full amount of such financial
126 assistance shall be reported to the Missouri veterans
127 commission by the institution and the recipient.

128 11. The Missouri veterans commission shall promulgate
129 all necessary rules for the implementation of the provisions
130 of this section. Any rule or portion of a rule, as that
131 term is defined in section 536.010, that is created under
132 the authority delegated in this section shall become
133 effective only if it complies with and is subject to all of
134 the provisions of chapter 536 and, if applicable, section
135 536.028. This section and chapter 536 are nonseverable and
136 if any of the powers vested with the general assembly
137 pursuant to chapter 536 to review, to delay the effective
138 date, or to disapprove and annul a rule are subsequently
139 held unconstitutional, then the grant of rulemaking
140 authority and any rule proposed or adopted after August 28,
141 2026, shall be invalid and void.

✓