



H.B. 359

125th General Assembly
(As Introduced)

Reps. Ujvagi, Key, Allen, DeGeeter, Hartnett, Miller, Cirelli, Redfern, Seaver, Sferra, Woodard, Barrett, Harwood, Strahorn, Koziura, Skindell, Brown

BILL SUMMARY

- Expands the program that provides tuition waivers for undergraduate studies at state institutions and grants for study at private post-secondary institutions for qualified children and spouses of public safety officers killed in the line of duty, to also include spouses of a member of the armed services of the United States killed in the line of duty while serving in a combat zone after May 7, 1975.

CONTENT AND OPERATION

Tuition waivers for spouses of members of the military killed in action

(R.C. 3333.26)

Under current law, certain children, spouses, and former spouses of firefighters, police officers, and other public service officers¹ killed in the line of duty are entitled to either a waiver of tuition and fees at a state university or college or a grant for study at a private post-secondary institution. The bill expands this tuition waiver and grant program to include a spouse of a member of the armed services of the United States killed in the line of duty while serving in a combat zone after May 7, 1975. The bill defines "combat zone" to mean an area which the President of the United States has designated under federal law as an area in which armed forces of the United States are or have engaged in combat.

¹ Specifically, a public service officer includes a volunteer firefighter; an Ohio firefighter; a police officer; a member of the Highway Patrol; certain employees of park districts who are designated to function as police officers, such as park rangers; other peace officers; and any person holding an equivalent position in another state. R.C. 3333.26(B)(1)(b).

To qualify for a tuition waiver at a state institution or a grant for study at a private institution, a spouse must be a resident of Ohio. A former spouse qualifies only if the spouse is a resident of Ohio and if the former spouse is the custodial parent of a minor child, pursuant to a court order allocating parental rights and responsibilities for care of the child, born during the marriage with the deceased veteran.

If a spouse or former spouse attends a state university or college, the state university or college is required to waive all instructional and general fees for up to four years of undergraduate study. If a spouse or former spouse enrolls in a nonprofit, private college or university, a private career school, or a qualifying for-profit school that chooses to participate in the program by reducing the tuition and fees of qualifying students, the Ohio Board of Regents is directed to reimburse the private institution. The amount of reimbursement is based on the amount of tuition waivers at state universities and colleges. Each year, state universities and colleges must report the number of students receiving tuition waivers and the average amount of such waivers. The Board of Regents, then, must determine the average amount of all waivers awarded by state universities and colleges. This average amount is the grant award to private schools in the ensuing academic year. For example, if the average tuition waiver in the 2001-2002 academic year at state universities and colleges was \$3,000, a private school could receive reimbursement for tuition reductions in the 2002-2003 academic year in an amount of \$3,000. Grants for study at private institutions cannot exceed the amount of tuition and student fees the student would be charged without a grant.

Funding to reimburse both public and private institutions for tuition waivers and grants awarded under this program is provided through the Board of Regent's Ohio Instructional Grant appropriation.

HISTORY

ACTION	DATE	JOURNAL ENTRY
Introduced	12-23-03	pp. 1342-1343

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