



H.B. 576

126th General Assembly
(As Introduced)

Rep. R. McGregor

BILL SUMMARY

- Provides for college tuition and fee waivers and reductions for the spouse or the qualified former spouse of a member of the United States Armed Services killed in the line of duty while serving in a combat zone after May 7, 1975.

CONTENT AND OPERATION

Current law

Current law generally provides that state-supported institutions of higher education *must waive* tuition and student fees for up to four academic years of undergraduate education for a student they admit who is (1) an Ohio resident who is under 26 years of age, or under 30 years of age if honorably discharged from the United States Armed Services, and who is the child of a public service officer killed in the line of duty or of a member of the United States Armed Services killed in the line of duty during Operation Enduring Freedom or Operation Iraqi Freedom, or (2) an Ohio resident who is the spouse or qualified former spouse of a public service officer killed in the line of duty (R.C. 3333.26(B)(2) and (3)).¹

¹ "Operation Enduring Freedom" means that period of conflict that began October 7, 2001, and ends on a date declared by the President of the United States or Congress (R.C. 3333.26(B)(1)(d)).

"Operation Iraqi Freedom" means that period of conflict that began March 20, 2003, and ends on a date declared by the President of the United States or Congress (R.C. 3333.26(B)(1)(e)).

"Public service officer" means an Ohio firefighter, volunteer firefighter, police officer, member of the State Highway Patrol, employee of a metropolitan park district who has been designated to exercise the powers of police officers under Ohio law, or other peace

Private institutions of higher education *may reduce* their tuition and student fees for the persons described above that they admit by an amount indicated by the Ohio Board of Regents and, by doing so, become eligible to receive a grant in that amount from the Board (R.C. 3333.26(C)).²

Changes proposed by the bill

The bill extends the state-supported institutions of higher education mandatory tuition and student fee waiver and the private institutions of higher education tuition and student fee permissible reduction provisions discussed above to a *spouse* or *qualified former spouse* of a member of the United States Armed Services killed in the line of duty while serving in a *combat zone after May 7, 1975*. The bill defines "combat zone" as an area that the President of the United States by executive order designates as an area in which the United States Armed Forces are or have engaged in combat. Additionally, as part of the preceding change, the bill alters the definition of a "qualified former spouse" to include the former spouse of a United States Armed Services member. (R.C. 3333.26(B)(1)(c) and (f) and (3).)

HISTORY

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officer as defined by the Revised Code, or a person holding any equivalent position in another state (R.C. 3333.26(B)(1)(b)).

"Qualified former spouse" means the former spouse of a public service officer who is the custodial parent of a minor child of that marriage pursuant to an order allocating parental rights and responsibilities for care of the child (R.C. 3333.26(B)(1)(c)).

² *Private institutions of higher education include barber schools, schools of cosmetology, institutions with a certificate of authorization issued by the Ohio Board of Regents, and career colleges and universities (R.C. 3333.26(C)).*

