



SOUTH CAROLINA REVENUE AND FISCAL AFFAIRS OFFICE
STATEMENT OF ESTIMATED FISCAL IMPACT
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Bill Number: H. 4748 Prefiled on November 20, 2019
Author: Moore
Subject: Veterans Bill of Rights
Requestor: House Medical, Military, Public, and Municipal Affairs
RFA Analyst(s): Gallagher, Griffin, and A. Martin
Impact Date: December 13, 2019

Fiscal Impact Summary

The bill requires higher education and technical institutions to grant academic credit for military training or service and to waive fees and refund tuition for active duty students in certain situations. This bill will not have an expenditure impact on the State Board of Technical and Comprehensive Education (SBTCE) or the technical colleges because they are currently in compliance with most of the requirements of this bill. Therefore, any additional administrative costs will be managed within existing resources.

Technical colleges report that this bill will not impact tuition and fee revenue, as similar procedures are already practiced by the institutions. Therefore, this bill will have no revenue impact on the technical colleges.

Additionally, this bill tasks the Department of Veterans Affairs with producing multiple reports, disseminating information, and developing strategies to increase access for mental health services to veterans. This fiscal impact of this bill is pending, contingent upon a response from the Department of Veterans Affairs, Department of Labor, Licensing, and Regulation (LLR), and the Commission on Higher Education (CHE).

Explanation of Fiscal Impact

Prefiled on November 20, 2019

State Expenditure

This bill requires the Department of Veterans Affairs (department) to produce monthly reports of workforce need projections by industry, job type, geography, and required credentials by geographic area. The department is further tasked with disseminating information on the Federal Motor Carrier Safety Administration's Military Skills Test Waiver Program.

The department is tasked with adopting necessary procedures to fully implement provisions requiring the state university, community college, and technical college systems to grant academic credits towards a veterans' degree for the completion of courses that were part of the veteran's military training or service. The department is further instructed to:

- develop and operate veteran health navigator services;
- implement a strategy to increase access for veteran mental health services;
- create a centralized provider database for mental health providers that have experience in the prevention and treatment of veteran suicide;

- develop a continuing education course for mental health providers to obtain expertise in veteran suicide assessment, prevention, treatment, and risk management; and
- end veteran homelessness three years from the date of this act.

In addition, this bill requires every institution within the state university, community college, and technical college system to grant academic credits without limitation towards an individual's degree for completion of courses that were part of the veteran's military training or service if the completed courses meet the standards of the American Council on Education or its equivalent. No charge may be assessed against a veteran who qualifies for these credits. Institutions of higher learning will be required to fully refund all tuition and fees to students called to active duty who do not meet attendance requirements sufficient to earn a grade. Fees or other penalties for late registration are waived for veterans returning from active duty.

State Board of Technical and Comprehensive Education. The SBTCE and technical colleges reported that they are currently in compliance with most of the requirements of this bill. While the institutions may experience some additional administrative costs, they anticipate that these costs will be managed using existing resources.

Commission on Higher Education. The expenditure impact of this bill is pending, contingent upon a response from the Commission on Higher Education.

Department of Veterans Affairs. This expenditure impact of this bill is pending, contingent upon a response from the department.

Department of Labor, Licensing and Regulation. The department is required to coordinate with LLR to review state licensing practices for which military members may have relevant training or experience and produce a report recommending steps that can be taken to increase recognition of military training and experience toward in-state licensing within one year after this bill's effective date. The expenditure impact of this bill on LLR is pending, contingent upon a response from the agency.

State Revenue

This bill prohibits institutions from charging fees to veterans who qualify for academic credit through military training or service to receive such credits. Many institutions of higher learning require a student to complete a minimum percentage of their coursework at the institution granting the degree. This bill would eliminate such residency requirements, and institutions could potentially experience a loss of revenue.

State Board of Technical and Comprehensive Education. The technical colleges reported that they currently have in place procedures similar to those required by this bill regarding tuition and fees. The technical institutions anticipate that any loss of revenue would be insignificant. Therefore, this bill will have no revenue impact on the technical colleges.

Commission on Higher Education. The revenue impact of this bill is pending, contingent upon a response from the Commission on Higher Education.

Local Expenditure

N/A

Local Revenue

N/A



Frank A. Rainwater, Executive Director