

SECOND REGULAR SESSION

HOUSE BILL NO. 957

92ND GENERAL ASSEMBLY

INTRODUCED BY REPRESENTATIVES CUNNINGHAM (145) (Sponsor), LEMBKE, SMITH (118), BOUGH, ANGST, MAYER, SALVA, SUTHERLAND, MUNZLINGER, SKAGGS, DUSENBERG, BROWN, SANDER, BIVINS, AND SMITH (14) (Co-sponsors).

Read 1st time January 7, 2004, and copies ordered printed.

STEPHEN S. DAVIS, Chief Clerk

2478L.011

AN ACT

To amend chapter 173, RSMo, by adding thereto one new section relating to the war on terror scholarship program.

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

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

173.237. 1. As used in this section, unless the context clearly requires otherwise, the following terms mean:

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

(2) "Books", any books required for any course for which tuition was paid by a grant awarded pursuant to this section;

(3) "Grant", the war on terror veteran's survivors grant as established in this section;

(4) "Institution of postsecondary education", any approved Missouri public institution of postsecondary education, as defined in section 173.205;

(5) "Room and board", any fee charged by an institution of postsecondary education for lodging or food for a survivor attending such institution who has received an award of tuition pursuant to this section;

(6) "Survivor", a child or spouse of a war on terror veteran as defined in this section;

(7) "Tuition", any tuition or incidental fee or both charged by an institution of postsecondary education, as defined in this section, for attendance at the institution by a student as a resident of this state;

18 **(8) "War on terror veteran", a person who served in the military in Afghanistan**
19 **or Iraq and to whom the following criteria shall apply:**

20 **(a) The veteran was a Missouri resident when first entering the military service and**
21 **at the time of death;**

22 **(b) The veteran was killed in a combat zone in Afghanistan or Iraq or the veteran's**
23 **death was attributable to an illness that was or could have been contracted while serving**
24 **in Afghanistan or Iraq; and**

25 **(c) The veteran served in the war on terror in Afghanistan or Iraq after 2001.**

26 **2. Within the limits of the amounts appropriated therefor, the coordinating board**
27 **for higher education shall award annually up to twenty-five grants to survivors of war on**
28 **terror veterans to attend institutions of postsecondary education in this state. If the**
29 **waiting list of eligible survivors exceeds fifty, the coordinating board may petition the**
30 **general assembly to expand the quota. If the quota is not expanded the eligibility of**
31 **survivors on the waiting list shall be extended.**

32 **3. A survivor may receive a grant pursuant to this section only so long as the**
33 **survivor is enrolled in a program leading to a certificate, or an associate or baccalaureate**
34 **degree. In no event shall a survivor receive a grant beyond the completion of the first**
35 **baccalaureate degree, regardless of age. No survivor shall receive more than one hundred**
36 **percent of tuition, room and board, and books when combined with similar funds made**
37 **available to such survivor.**

38 **4. The coordinating board for higher education shall:**

39 **(1) Promulgate all necessary rules and regulations for the implementation of this**
40 **section;**

41 **(2) Determine minimum standards of performance in order for a survivor to**
42 **remain eligible to receive a grant under this program;**

43 **(3) Make available on behalf of a survivor an amount toward the survivor's tuition,**
44 **room and board, and books which is equal to the grant to which the survivor is entitled**
45 **under the provisions of this section;**

46 **(4) Provide the forms and determine the procedures necessary for a survivor to**
47 **apply for and receive a grant under this program.**

48 **5. In order to be eligible to receive a grant pursuant to this section, a survivor shall**
49 **be certified as eligible by a Missouri state veterans service officer. In the case of an illness-**
50 **related death, such certification shall be made upon qualified medical certification by a**
51 **Veterans Administration medical authority that the illness was or could have been**
52 **contracted while serving in Afghanistan or Iraq and contributed to or was the cause of**
53 **death of the veteran, as defined in subsection 1 of this section.**

54 **6. A survivor who is enrolled or has been accepted for enrollment as an**
55 **undergraduate postsecondary student at an approved institution of postsecondary**
56 **education shall receive a grant in an amount not to exceed the actual tuition, as defined in**
57 **this section, the actual cost of room and board, as defined in this section, and the actual**
58 **cost of books, as defined in this section, up to a maximum of five hundred dollars for**
59 **books, charged at an approved institution of postsecondary education where the survivor**
60 **is enrolled or accepted for enrollment.**

61 **7. A survivor who is a recipient of a grant may transfer from one approved public**
62 **institution of postsecondary education to another without losing his or her entitlement**
63 **under this section. The board shall make necessary adjustments in the amount of the**
64 **grant. If a grant recipient at any time withdraws from the institution of postsecondary**
65 **education so that under the rules and regulations of that institution he or she is entitled to**
66 **a refund of any tuition, fees, room and board, books, or other charges, the institution shall**
67 **pay the portion of the refund to which he or she is entitled attributable to the grant for that**
68 **semester or similar grading period to the board.**

69 **8. If a survivor is granted financial assistance under any other student aid program,**
70 **public or private, the full amount of such aid shall be reported to the board by the**
71 **institution and the eligible survivor.**

72 **9. Nothing in this section shall be construed as a promise or guarantee that a person**
73 **will be admitted to an institution of postsecondary education or to a particular institution**
74 **of postsecondary education, will be allowed to continue to attend an institution of**
75 **postsecondary education after having been admitted, or will be graduated from an**
76 **institution of postsecondary education.**

77 **10. The benefits conferred by this section shall be available to any academically**
78 **qualified surviving children or spouses of war on terror veterans as defined in subsection**
79 **1 of this section, regardless of the survivor's age, until December 31, 2010. After December**
80 **31, 2010, the benefits conferred by this section shall not be available to such persons who**
81 **are twenty-five years of age or older, except spouses will remain eligible until they reach**
82 **forty years of age.**

83 **11. This section shall expire August 28, 2034.**