

SCS SB 968 -- TUITION RATES FOR MEMBERS OF THE MILITARY

SPONSOR: Brown

COMMITTEE ACTION: Voted "Do Pass" by the Standing Committee on Veterans by a vote of 10 to 0. Voted "Do Pass" by the Select Committee on Social Services by a vote of 6 to 0.

This bill modifies several provisions relating to tuition rates for members of the military.

The bill allows current members of the Missouri National Guard and members of a reserve component of the Armed Forces of the United States to receive in-state residency status for the purposes of tuition at any public four-year institution of higher education, or in-district residency status for any two-year public institution, as described in the bill.

The bill also modifies the Missouri Returning Heroes' Education Act. Currently, the tuition limitation authorized by the Missouri Returning Heroes' Education Act is applied after all other federal and state aid for which the veteran is eligible has been applied. This bill applies the tuition limitation before all other aid.

This bill also repeals a provision that limits the amount of aid a veteran shall receive to the actual cost of attendance.

The Wartime Veteran's Survivor Grant program sunsets in 2014. The bill reauthorizes the program, which provides higher education financial aid to the spouses and children of wartime veterans.

This provision shall sunset on August 28, 2020, unless reauthorized by the General Assembly.

This bill contains an emergency clause.

PROPONENTS: Supporters say that the bill makes education more accessible to veterans. The United States is deploying 500 more service members to Iraq which means there will be more veterans who will need assistance. This legislation ensures that veterans and their families are provided tuition assistance.

Testifying for the bill were Senator Brown; Erik J. Anthes; and Dennis Sanbothe, Missouri National Guard.

OPPONENTS: There was no opposition voiced to the committee.