

SENATE BILL NO. 115

BY SENATORS BOUDREAUX, BARROW, BOUIE, CARTER, CATHEY, CONNICK, CORTEZ, DUPLESSIS, FESI, FIELDS, HARRIS, HENRY, HENSGENS, HEWITT, JACKSON, KLEINPETER, LUNEAU, MCMATH, MILLIGAN, FRED MILLS, ROBERT MILLS, MIZELL, PEACOCK, POPE, PRICE, SMITH, STINE, TALBOT, TARVER, WHITE AND WOMACK AND REPRESENTATIVES ADAMS, AMEDEE, BACALA, BAGLEY, BEAULLIEU, BOYD, BROWN, BUTLER, ROBBY CARTER, WILFORD CARTER, CORMIER, COX, EDMONDS, FIRMENT, FISHER, GAINES, GAROFALO, GLOVER, HORTON, HUGHES, ILLG, JENKINS, MIKE JOHNSON, KNOX, LAFLEUR, LARVADAIN, LYONS, MOORE, CHARLES OWEN, PIERRE, SELDERS AND WHITE

Prefiled pursuant to Article III, Section 2(A)(4)(b)(i) of the Constitution of Louisiana.

1 AN ACT

2 To amend and reenact R.S. 29:288 and to enact R.S. 17:1686(D) and R.S. 29:771.1, relative  
3 to educational benefits for children and spouses of certain veterans; to provide  
4 definitions; to provide relative to eligibility; to provide for a veteran benefits and  
5 services poster; and to provide for related matters.

6 Be it enacted by the Legislature of Louisiana:

7 Section 1. R.S. 29:288 is hereby amended and reenacted and R.S. 29:771.1 is hereby  
8 enacted to read as follows:

9 §288. Educational benefits for children, spouses, and surviving spouses of veterans

10 **A.(1) For the purpose of this Subsection, "qualified veteran" shall mean**  
11 **a member of the armed forces of the United States of America who:**

12 **(a) Was either killed in action, died in active service from other causes,**  
13 **is missing in action, is a prisoner of war, died as a result of a service-connected**  
14 **disability incurred during a wartime period as defined in R.S. 29:251.2, or who,**  
15 **prior to death, was rated ninety to one hundred percent service-connected**  
16 **disabled by the United States Department of Veterans Affairs by evaluation of**  
17 **the Rating Schedule or was determined by the department to be unemployable**  
18 **as a result of a service-connected disability, and who was a resident of Louisiana**  
19 **for a period of not less than twelve months immediately preceding entrance into**

1 service or for a period not less than twenty-four months prior to the veteran's  
 2 death.

3 (b) Is rated ninety to one hundred percent service-connected disabled by  
 4 the United States Department of Veterans Affairs by evaluation of the Rating  
 5 Schedule or is determined by the department to be unemployable as a result of  
 6 a service-connected disability and has been a resident of Louisiana for a period  
 7 of not less than twenty-four months prior to the veteran's child's admission into  
 8 a program of education at a public postsecondary institution.

9 (2) Children, **Any child**, not less than sixteen nor more than twenty-five years  
 10 of age, spouses, and surviving spouses, within ten years from the date of eligibility,  
 11 of members of the armed forces of the United States of America who were killed in  
 12 action or died in active service from other causes or who are missing in action or  
 13 who are prisoners of war or who died as a result of a service-connected disability  
 14 incurred during a wartime period defined in R.S. 29:251.2 and who for a period of  
 15 not less than twelve months immediately preceding their entrance into service were  
 16 residents of this state and children not less than sixteen nor more than twenty-five  
 17 years of age of veterans rated ninety to one hundred percent service-connected  
 18 disabled by the United States Department of Veterans Affairs by evaluation of the  
 19 Rating Schedule and children not less than sixteen nor more than twenty-five years  
 20 of age of veterans who have been determined by the department to be unemployable  
 21 as a result of a service-connected disability **of a qualified veteran** may attend any  
 22 state college or university, including institutions under the jurisdiction of the Board  
 23 of Supervisors of Community and Technical Colleges **public postsecondary**  
 24 **education institution within the state**, without having to pay tuition, matriculation,  
 25 registration, laboratory, athletic, medical, and other school-imposed fees, including  
 26 but not limited to nonresidency and other special fees if the veteran has been a  
 27 resident of this state for a period of not less than twenty-four months immediately  
 28 preceding the dependent's admission into a program of education.

29 **B.(1) For the purpose of this Subsection, "qualified veteran" shall mean**  
 30 **a member of the armed forces of the United States of America who:**

1           (a) Was killed in action, died in active service from other causes, is  
2           missing in action, is a prisoner of war, died as a result of a service-connected  
3           disability incurred during a wartime period as defined in R.S. 29:251.2, or who,  
4           prior to death, was rated ninety to one hundred percent service-connected  
5           disabled by the United States Department of Veterans Affairs by evaluation of  
6           the Rating Schedule or was determined by the department to be unemployable  
7           as a result of a service-connected disability, and was a resident of Louisiana for  
8           a period of not less than twelve months immediately preceding entrance into  
9           service or for a period not less than twenty-four months prior to death.

10           (2) A spouse or surviving spouse of a qualified veteran, within ten years  
11           from the date of eligibility, may attend any public postsecondary education  
12           institution within the state, without having to pay tuition, matriculation,  
13           registration, laboratory, athletic, medical, and other school-imposed fees,  
14           including but not limited to nonresidency and other special fees.

15           C. The public postsecondary education institution shall not grant the  
16           benefits provided under the provisions of this Section if the student has received  
17           or is receiving the benefits provided under the provisions of R.S. 17:1686.

18                                   \*       \*       \*

19           §771.1. Veteran benefits and services poster

20           A. The Louisiana Workforce Commission shall consult with the  
21           Department of Veterans Affairs to create and distribute a veteran's benefits and  
22           services poster. The poster shall, at a minimum, include information regarding  
23           the following services available to veterans:

24           (1) Contact and website information for the Department of Veterans  
25           Affairs and its services offered to veterans.

26           (2) Contact information for the United States Department of Veterans  
27           Affairs Veterans Crisis Line.

28           (3) Mental health and substance abuse prevention resources.

29           (4) Veteran homelessness prevention resources.

30           (5) Veteran disability compensation and pension claims filing assistance.

1                   (6) Educational, workforce, and training resources.

2                   (7) Louisiana state property and military retiree pay tax exemptions  
3                   available to veterans.

4                   (8) State veteran home and cemetery benefits.

5                   B. Every employer in the state with more than fifty full-time equivalent  
6                   employees shall display the poster created pursuant to this Section in a  
7                   conspicuous place accessible to employees in the workplace.

8                   Section 2. R.S. 17:1686(D) is hereby enacted to read as follows:

9                   §1686. Scholarship for a child of a military person killed in performance of duty

10   \*       \*       \*

11                   D. The public postsecondary education institution shall not grant the  
12                   benefits provided under the provisions of this Section if the student has received  
13                   or is receiving the benefits provided under the provisions of R.S. 29:288.

14                   Section 3. This Act shall become effective upon signature by the governor or, if not  
15                   signed by the governor, upon expiration of the time for bills to become law without signature  
16                   by the governor, as provided by Article III, Section 18 of the Constitution of Louisiana. If  
17                   vetoed by the governor and subsequently approved by the legislature, this Act shall become  
18                   effective on the day following such approval.

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PRESIDENT OF THE SENATE

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SPEAKER OF THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

\_\_\_\_\_  
GOVERNOR OF THE STATE OF LOUISIANA

APPROVED: \_\_\_\_\_