

2018 Regular Session

SENATE BILL NO. 140

BY SENATOR GATTI

TUITION. Provides active duty military members, qualified veterans, or the spouses and dependent children of certain military members with an education benefit. (gov sig)

1 AN ACT

2 To enact R.S.17:1688, relative to tuition and fee exemptions for military members, veterans,
3 and their dependents; to provide definitions; to provide relative to initial and ongoing
4 eligibility; to provide for repayment of benefits under certain circumstance; and to
5 provide for related matters.

6 Be it enacted by the Legislature of Louisiana:

7 Section 1. R.S. 17:1688 is hereby enacted to read as follows:

8 **§1688. Tuition and fee exemption for military members and military veterans**
9 **and dependents; definitions; eligibility**

10 **A. Definitions**

11 **As used in this Section:**

12 **(1) "Child" means the offspring of a military member who is dependent**
13 **upon the military member for support or was dependent upon the military**
14 **member at the time the member's military duty resulted in the member's death.**

15 **(2) "Military member" means any person who meets all of the following**
16 **criteria:**

17 **(a) Serves full-time duty in the active military of the United States.**

1 **(b) Entered the service at a location in this state.**

2 **(c) Declared this state as his home of record in the manner provided by**
3 **the applicable military branch.**

4 **(3) "Military veteran" means a person who meets all of the following**
5 **criteria:**

6 **(a) Was honorably discharged from the military of the United States**
7 **after serving full-time on active duty for more than four years.**

8 **(b) Currently resides in this state.**

9 **(c) Entered the service at a location in this state.**

10 **(d) Declared this state as his home of record in the manner provided by**
11 **the applicable military branch.**

12 **(4) "Spouse" means the wife or husband of a military member or who**
13 **was the wife or husband of a military member at the time the member's**
14 **performance of his military duties resulted in the member's death. Any spouse**
15 **claiming an exemption under this Section shall be domiciled in Louisiana for at**
16 **least the two consecutive years immediately prior to claiming an exemption.**

17 **B. Beginning with the 2018-2019 academic year, any military member**
18 **or military veteran, as defined in Subsection A of this Section, who is eligible for**
19 **admission to and enrollment in a public postsecondary institution in Louisiana**
20 **shall be admitted to and enrolled in such institution and shall be provided an**
21 **exemption from the payment of tuition and required fee charges.**

22 **C.(1)(a) The exemption shall cover tuition and required fee charges for**
23 **not more than one hundred and fifty hours of academic credit or the receipt of**
24 **a degree at the associate, baccalaureate, masters, or professional level,**
25 **whichever occurs first.**

26 **(b) If the military member or veteran enrolls in more than one public**
27 **postsecondary institution in the state, the exemption provided by all institutions**
28 **combined shall be limited to one hundred and fifty hours of academic credit.**

29 **(2) In the case of tuition charged by an institution that confers a**

1 professional degree, the qualified exemption shall not exceed the average
2 undergraduate tuition and required fee charges charged to full-time students
3 carrying a full-time academic load attending public postsecondary institutions
4 that offer baccalaureate degrees, as determined by the Louisiana Office of
5 Student Financial Assistance.

6 D. If a student's service in the military terminates for other than an
7 honorable discharge, or if he is placed on academic probation or withdraws
8 from the postsecondary institution while receiving the benefits of any exemption
9 afforded by this Section, his exemption shall be forfeited immediately and he
10 shall pay to the institution in which he is enrolled all tuition and required fee
11 charges from which he was exempted for the academic term in which his service
12 terminated, was placed on scholastic probation, or withdrew from the
13 institution.

14 E.(1) The spouse or child of a military member who dies or is
15 permanently disabled as a result of one or more wounds, injuries, or illnesses
16 incurred while serving on active duty or in an operation or area that the
17 secretary of defense of the United States designates, in writing, as a combat
18 operation or a zone of combat, is eligible for the exemption provided to a
19 military member or military veteran pursuant to Subsections B and C of this
20 Section.

21 (2) To be eligible for the exemption, the spouse or child claiming the
22 exemption shall:

23 (a) Meet the definition of spouse or child as provided in Subsection A of
24 this Section.

25 (b) Meet the academic standards and criteria established for admission
26 to and enrollment in the public postsecondary institution.

27 (c) Not claim any benefits as provided in R.S. 17:1686.

28 (3) If the spouse or child claiming the exemption is placed on academic
29 probation or withdraws from the postsecondary institution while receiving the

1 **exemption, his exemption shall be forfeited immediately and he shall pay to the**
 2 **institution in which he is enrolled all tuition and required fee charges from**
 3 **which he was exempted for the academic term in which he was placed on**
 4 **academic probation or withdrew from the institution.**

5 Section 2. This Act shall become effective upon signature by the governor or, if not
 6 signed by the governor, upon expiration of the time for bills to become law without signature
 7 by the governor, as provided by Article III, Section 18 of the Constitution of Louisiana. If
 8 vetoed by the governor and subsequently approved by the legislature, this Act shall become
 9 effective on the day following such approval.

The original instrument and the following digest, which constitutes no part
 of the legislative instrument, were prepared by Cheryl Serrett.

DIGEST

SB 140 Original

2018 Regular Session

Gatti

Proposed law provides that, beginning with the 2018-2019 academic year, each public postsecondary institution shall provide an exemption for tuition and required fee charges to active duty military members who meet the institution's admission and enrollment requirements, and:

- (1) Serves full-time duty in the active military of the United States.
- (2) Entered the service at a location in this state.
- (3) Declared this state as his home of record in the manner provided by the applicable military branch.

Proposed law provides that each public postsecondary institution shall also provide an exemption for tuition and required fee charges to military veterans who meet the institution's admission and enrollment requirements, and:

- (1) Was honorably discharged from the military of the United States after serving full-time on active duty for more than four years.
- (2) Currently resides in this state.
- (3) Entered the service at a location in this state.
- (4) Declared this state as his home of record in the manner provided by the applicable military branch.

Proposed law further provides that the spouse and children of an eligible military member who is killed or permanently disabled from his service duties may also claim the exemption, provided they meet the admissions criteria of the postsecondary institution.

Proposed law provides the exemption shall cover tuition and required fee charges for not more than 150 hours of academic credit or the receipt of a degree at the associate, baccalaureate, masters, or professional level, whichever occurs first. Further provides if the

military member, veteran, or dependent enrolls in more than one public postsecondary institution in the state, the exemption provided by all institutions combined shall be limited to 150 hours of academic credit.

Proposed law provides that if a student's service in the military terminates for other than an honorable discharge, or if he is placed on academic probation or withdraws from the postsecondary institution while receiving the benefits, his exemption shall be forfeited immediately and he shall pay to the institution all charges from which he was exempted for the academic term in which his service terminated, was placed on scholastic probation, or withdrew from the postsecondary institution.

Effective upon signature of the governor or lapse of time for gubernatorial action.

(Adds R.S. 17:1688)