

1 SB315
2 184593-2
3 By Senator Dial
4 RFD: Finance and Taxation Education
5 First Read: 14-MAR-17

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4 ENGROSSED

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6
7 A BILL
8 TO BE ENTITLED
9 AN ACT

10
11 To amend Sections 31-6-4, 31-6-5, 31-6-6, 31-6-9,
12 31-6-10, 31-6-11, 31-6-16, 31-10-2, 31-10-3, 31-10-4,
13 31-10-21, and 31-10-22 of the Code of Alabama 1975, to
14 increase the amount that may be spent by the Alabama
15 Commission on Higher Education for an eligible member of the
16 Alabama National Guard from \$2,000 per year to \$4,800 per year
17 and remove the requirement for a certain amount of yearly
18 assistance to be spent on each member per semester; to
19 establish an exemption from tuition and fees for any member of
20 the Alabama National Guard who remains in good standing and
21 meets certain criteria while enrolled at any in-state public
22 institution of higher learning; relating to the educational
23 scholarship benefits for dependents of veterans; to require
24 dependents submit proof of residency for veterans; to restrict
25 the reimbursement for educational benefits to the Department
26 of Defense Tuition Assistance Cap; to establish a grade point
27 average requirement for dependents receiving benefits; to

1 require state educational benefits to be applied only after
2 all other resources have been exhausted; to create the Alabama
3 Disabled Veterans' Dependents Education Advisory Committee
4 responsible for monitoring the progress of dependents
5 receiving educational benefits; to provide for the membership
6 and meetings of the committee; and to require that the
7 committee report its findings to the Legislature.

8 BE IT ENACTED BY THE LEGISLATURE OF ALABAMA:

9 Section 1. Sections 31-6-4, 31-6-5, 31-6-6, 31-6-9,
10 31-6-11, 31-6-16, 31-10-2, 31-10-3, 31-10-4, 31-10-21, and
11 31-10-22 of the Code of Alabama 1975, are amended to read as
12 follows:

13 "§31-6-4.

14 "(a) Any child whose father or mother:

15 "(1) Was killed or died in line of duty or is listed
16 as missing in action or is/was a prisoner of war or whose
17 death or permanent total disabilities were service-connected
18 while serving as a member of the armed forces; or

19 "(2) Died from a disability incurred from military
20 service, as established by the State Department of Veterans'
21 Affairs, after having been discharged under conditions other
22 than dishonorable and after having served at least 90 days
23 consecutively in the armed forces prior to and/or subsequent
24 to the date on which such disability occurred, or who was
25 honorably discharged by reason of wartime, service-connected
26 disability after serving less than 90 days; or

1 "(3) Has been assigned 100 percent permanent or
2 total disability rated by the United States Veterans'
3 Administration, or was discharged or retired from the armed
4 forces with a ~~20~~ 40 percent or more disability and maintained
5 that percentage (such person to be deemed to be a disabled
6 veteran)
7 "may attend any Alabama state institution of higher learning,
8 college, or university for a period of five standard academic
9 years, not to exceed 45 months or the equivalent of 45 months
10 if enrolled part-time, without paying any tuition, fees, or
11 books whatsoever for such college or university attendance, or
12 any such child may take a prescribed course in any Alabama
13 state trade school for the length of any prescribed course of
14 study of his or her choosing, and if such course does not
15 require the full 45 months, then training for the remainder of
16 such 45 months' entitlement may be taken at a state-supported
17 college or university only, without the payment of any
18 tuition, fees, or books whatsoever. Training under this
19 section must be initiated prior to the child's thirtieth
20 birthday, and must be completed within eight years after its
21 initiation, except for delays caused by military service
22 during the training period, and in no case may training be
23 received under this chapter beyond the thirty-eighth birthday
24 of such child.

25 "(b) Except as provided in Section 31-6-11(e), the
26 educational benefits provided by this section to children
27 making application for benefits for the first time beginning

1 with the fall term of the 2014-2015 academic year, and
2 thereafter, shall be limited to undergraduate courses of study
3 only, and the value of tuition paid shall be limited to the
4 in-state tuition rate of the Alabama state institution of
5 higher learning, college, or university attended. Effective
6 the fall term of the 2017-2018 academic year, and thereafter,
7 the value of tuition paid per semester hour (or equivalent)
8 shall be limited to the rate of the Department of Defense
9 Tuition Assistance Cap.

10 "(c) The minimum disability requirement provided for
11 in subsection (a) (3) will remain 20 percent for those making
12 application for benefits under this chapter prior to the
13 effective date of this bill."

14 "§31-6-5.

15 "(a) Any wife or husband or unmarried widow or
16 widower whose spouse, during their marriage:

17 "(1) Was killed or died in the line of duty or is
18 listed as missing in action or is/was a prisoner of war while
19 serving as a member of the armed forces;

20 "(2) Died from a disability incurred from military
21 service; or

22 "(3) Is 100 percent permanently and totally
23 disabled, whose permanent and total disabilities were
24 service-connected;

25 "shall be entitled to training in any Alabama state-supported
26 college or university for a period of five standard academic
27 years, not to exceed 45 months or to training for the

1 equivalent of 45 months if enrolled part-time or to training
2 in a prescribed course in a state-supported trade school, and
3 if such course does not require the full 45 months, then
4 training for the remainder of such 45 months' entitlement may
5 be taken at a state-supported college or university only,
6 without the payment of any tuition, fees, or books,
7 whatsoever. One change of program will be allowed without
8 counseling. All training received under this section must be
9 completed within eight years after the beginning date of the
10 course. This section shall not apply to the spouse of any such
11 deceased serviceman or veteran who has remarried prior to
12 applying for and obtaining educational benefits under this
13 section, and should any such spouse of such deceased
14 serviceman or veteran remarry during the time he or she is in
15 attendance upon any of the schools, colleges, or universities
16 mentioned in this section, then he or she shall pay tuition
17 and fees for the course of study or attendance upon such
18 school, college, or university from the time of the
19 remarriage. The benefits provided under this section shall be
20 in addition to federal government benefits.

21 "(b) Except as provided in Section 31-6-11(e), the
22 educational benefits provided by this section to wives,
23 husbands, and unmarried widows or widowers making application
24 for benefits for the first time beginning with the fall term
25 of the 2014-2015 academic year, and thereafter, shall be
26 limited to undergraduate courses of study only, and the value
27 of tuition paid shall be limited to the in-state tuition rate

1 of the Alabama state-supported college or university attended.
2 Effective the fall term of the 2017-2018 academic year, and
3 thereafter, the value of tuition paid per semester hour (or
4 equivalent) shall be limited to the rate of the Department of
5 Defense Tuition Assistance Cap."

6 "§31-6-6.

7 "(a) The spouse and children of any veteran who is
8 suffering from ~~20~~ 40 to 90 percent service-connected
9 disability brought about from service in the Armed Forces of
10 the United States, or the unmarried widow or widower and
11 children of a deceased veteran who was suffering from ~~20~~ 40
12 percent or more of service-connected disability at the time of
13 death, provided such disabilities as are mentioned herein are
14 incurred from military service, as established by the State
15 Department of Veterans' Affairs, shall be entitled to the
16 following educational advantages and opportunities:

17 "(1) The spouse or unmarried widow or widower, as
18 the case may be, shall be entitled to up to 27 months of
19 schooling or the equivalent of 27 months if enrolled
20 part-time, in any Alabama state-supported institution of
21 higher learning, college, or university, or to a prescribed
22 course in any Alabama state-supported trade school without the
23 payment of any tuition, fee, or books. One change of program
24 will be allowed without counseling. It is provided, however,
25 that all training received at state institutions of higher
26 learning or state trade schools under this subdivision must be

1 completed within a period of six years after the beginning
2 date of such two-year course or such prescribed course.

3 "(2) Each child of such disabled veteran shall be
4 entitled to five standard academic years, or the equivalent of
5 45 months if enrolled part-time, in any Alabama
6 state-supported institution of higher learning, college, or
7 university, or to a prescribed course at an Alabama
8 state-supported trade school. If the course of training at the
9 trade school does not require the full time to which such
10 child is entitled hereunder, then the remaining entitlement
11 may be taken in a state-supported college or university only,
12 without payment of any tuition, fees, or books. One change of
13 program will be allowed without counseling. Training under
14 this subdivision must be initiated prior to the child's
15 twenty-sixth birthday, and must be completed within eight
16 years after its initiation, except for delays caused by
17 military service during the training period, and in no case
18 may training be received under this section beyond the
19 thirty-fourth birthday of such child.

20 (b) The minimum disability requirement provided for
21 in subsection (a) will remain 20 percent for those first
22 making application for benefits under this chapter prior to
23 the effective date of this bill.

24 "~~(b)~~ (c) Except as provided in Section 31-6-11(e),
25 the educational benefits provided by this section to spouses,
26 children, and unmarried widows and widowers making application
27 for benefits for the first time beginning with the fall term

1 of the 2014-2015 academic year, and thereafter, shall be
2 limited to undergraduate courses of study only, and the value
3 of tuition paid shall be limited to the in-state tuition rate
4 of the Alabama state-supported institution of higher learning,
5 college, or university attended. Effective the fall term of
6 the 2017-2018 academic year, and thereafter, the value of
7 tuition paid per semester hour (or equivalent) shall be
8 limited to the rate of the Department of Defense Tuition
9 Assistance Cap.

10 "(e) (d) The benefits provided under this section
11 shall be available in addition to federal government benefits.
12 Any child, spouse, or unmarried widow or widower who was
13 denied full entitlement, 27 or 45 months, whichever the case
14 may be, shall have the remainder of their entitlement
15 reinstated under this chapter."

16 "§31-6-9.

17 "The benefits provided under this chapter shall be a
18 cumulative amount equal to tuition, fees, and books in
19 addition to any other state or federal benefits to which the
20 wife or children of a disabled veteran or a member of the
21 armed forces who is listed as missing in action or as a
22 prisoner of war or the widow and children of a deceased
23 veteran are entitled and shall only be available after all
24 other federal, state and third party education benefits have
25 been applied, to include those federal and state benefits
26 available after the submission of the Free Application for
27 Student Aid (FAFSA). It is further provided that any wife,

1 widow, or dependent of a veteran who receives benefits under
2 this chapter, and whose benefit period is interrupted due to
3 accident, injury, or illness, shall have the benefit time
4 period which is lost due to such accident, illness, or injury
5 restored to him or her.

6 "§31-6-10.

7 "(a) All applications for benefits accruing under
8 this chapter must be made to the State Department of Veterans'
9 Affairs. The State Service Commissioner, or any official of
10 the department designated by him, is hereby charged with the
11 responsibility and duty of determining the eligibility of each
12 applicant for the benefits under this chapter; provided,
13 however, that such determination of eligibility shall be based
14 upon the findings of the United States Veterans'
15 Administration in addition to other proofs and records
16 required under this chapter. The State Service Commissioner
17 shall cause the State Department of Veterans' Affairs to issue
18 a certificate of eligibility and entitlement in behalf of each
19 applicant who may be determined by him to be entitled to the
20 benefits.

21 "(b) Notwithstanding any other provision of this
22 chapter to the contrary, any veteran having applied for
23 disability benefits prior to October 1, 2017, but having not
24 received final adjudication from either the U.S. Department of
25 Veterans Affairs or the Alabama Department of Veterans Affairs
26 by that date, their dependents shall remain eligible for the
27 education benefits as described before the amending language

1 of this bill, upon receiving the certifying documentation from
2 the U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs or the Alabama
3 Department of Veterans Affairs."

4 "§31-6-11.

5 "(a) Before an application of any veteran for
6 benefits under this chapter can be approved, such veteran
7 shall submit proof, satisfactory to the State Department of
8 Veterans' Affairs, of all of the following:

9 "(1) Identification.

10 "(2) Having been a permanent resident of the State
11 of Alabama for at least one year immediately prior to his or
12 her entrance into service.

13 "(3) An honorable discharge or other proof of
14 honorable termination of at least 24 months of service in the
15 armed forces, or if such veteran was discharged or released by
16 reason of service-connected disability then proof of honorable
17 termination of less than 24 months of service is acceptable.

18 "(b) Before the application of a wife, widow, or
19 child of a disabled veteran or a deceased veteran or
20 serviceman for educational benefits under this chapter is
21 approved, proof, satisfactory to the State Department of
22 Veterans' Affairs, must be submitted of all of the following:

23 "(1) Establishing the identification of such wife,
24 widow, or child as the wife, widow, or child of the veteran or
25 serviceman, as the case may be.

26 "(2) Of the veteran or serviceman having been a
27 permanent resident of the State of Alabama for at least one

1 year immediately prior, to his or her entrance into service,
2 or if the applicant is the wife, widow, or child of a totally
3 and permanently disabled veteran, then proof either of the
4 veteran's having been a permanent resident of the State of
5 Alabama for at least one year prior to his or her entrance
6 into service or proof that the veteran has been a bona fide
7 resident of this state for at least five years immediately
8 prior to the filing of the application for benefits under this
9 chapter or immediately prior to his or her death if the
10 veteran is deceased.

11 ~~"(3)~~ (3) An honorable discharge or other proof of
12 honorable termination of service of the veteran or serviceman
13 in the armed forces for a period of at least 90 days between
14 the dates mentioned in this chapter, or service of less than
15 90 days if the veteran or serviceman was discharged or
16 released by reason of service-connected disability.

17 "(c) The service upon which any benefits are awarded
18 under this chapter shall have been rendered during wartime or
19 under extrahazardous conditions, except as provided otherwise
20 in this section; and this condition of eligibility shall be
21 established by the State Department of Veterans' Affairs.

22 "(d) The service requirements provided for in
23 subsection (c) shall not apply to any person making
24 application for benefits under this chapter beginning with the
25 fall term of the 2014-2015 academic year, and thereafter.

26 ~~"(e)~~ (e) Notwithstanding any other provision of this
27 chapter to the contrary, any person denied educational

1 benefits provided by this chapter based solely upon the
2 service requirements provided for in subsection (c) shall be
3 eligible to receive the benefits the person would otherwise
4 have been entitled to had their application been approved at
5 the time of initial application, except as provided otherwise
6 in this subsection. Any age limitation on the benefits
7 provided by this chapter shall be extended in like manner for
8 any such previously denied person to ensure that the person
9 has the opportunity to receive all benefits they would
10 otherwise have been entitled. In order to receive any
11 educational benefits, such previously denied person must
12 reapply for educational benefits with the State Department of
13 Veterans' Affairs and begin use of the educational benefits no
14 later than the fall term of the 2015-2016 academic year. The
15 value of tuition paid for any such previously denied person
16 shall be limited to the in-state tuition rate of the Alabama
17 state institution of higher learning, college, or university
18 attended. Effective the fall term of the 2017-2018 academic
19 year, and thereafter, the value of tuition paid per semester
20 hour (or equivalent) shall be limited to the rate of the
21 Department of Defense Tuition Assistance Cap."

22 "§31-6-16.

23 "Nothing in this chapter shall be construed as
24 lowering the standards or requirements, or as to making any
25 exceptions thereto for entrance into any of the state schools
26 or institutions affected by this chapter. All applicants, in
27 order to obtain the educational benefits of this chapter, must

1 first meet all scholastic and other requirements for entrance
2 into any of the schools coming within the purview of this
3 chapter. All dependents receiving the educational benefits
4 must maintain a 2.0 grade point average while attending any of
5 the state schools or institutions affected by this chapter. If
6 the dependent fails to maintain a 2.0 grade point average for
7 any completed academic period while receiving the education
8 benefits, the benefits shall be suspended for the succeeding
9 academic period or until such time as the dependent maintains
10 a 2.0 grade point average at the end of the completed academic
11 period."

12 "§31-10-2.

13 "The following words used in this article shall have
14 the meanings as set forth by this section:

15 "(1) ALABAMA NATIONAL GUARD. Federally recognized
16 units of the Alabama National Guard.

17 "(2) ACTIVE MEMBER. A member of a federally
18 recognized unit of the Alabama National Guard meeting the
19 minimum requirements for satisfactory membership as defined in
20 the Department of the Army and Department of the Air Force
21 regulations.

22 "(3) TUITION. The cost of instruction and fees to
23 the student as stated in the institution's catalog, plus the
24 average cost of books and supplies, to a minimum of one
25 hundred dollars (\$100) per semester, ~~and not to exceed one~~
26 ~~thousand dollars (\$1,000) per semester after all federal~~
27 ~~benefits have been applied to the account of the student, for~~

1 a total amount not exceeding ~~two thousand dollars (\$2,000)~~
2 four thousand eight hundred dollars (\$4,800) annually. after
3 all federal benefits have been applied to the account of the
4 student."

5 "§31-10-3.

6 "The Alabama Commission on Higher Education is
7 hereby authorized to pay or reimburse the tuition for any
8 active member of the Alabama National Guard who is enrolled in
9 a program leading to the associate, baccalaureate, masters, or
10 doctorate degree in an accredited institution of higher
11 learning, technical college, or junior college within the
12 State of Alabama. To be eligible for such benefits, the
13 individual, at the time of his or her enrollment must be a
14 member of the Alabama National Guard in good standing and a
15 member of a federally recognized unit of the Alabama National
16 Guard. The member must be at least 17 years of age ~~and must be~~
17 ~~a resident of the State of Alabama~~. The tuition grant
18 authorized under this article may be used for undergraduate or
19 graduate studies. In no event will any individual be eligible
20 to receive more than 100 percent of covered expenses when
21 combined with similar federal veterans' educational benefits
22 available to members of the National Guard. All applicants for
23 a tuition grant shall complete a Free Application for Student
24 Financial Aid (FAFSA). No person shall be eligible for a
25 tuition grant for more than 12 years after the date of the
26 first tuition payment to him or her under this article. For
27 degrees above the baccalaureate, only 10 percent of the total

1 funds of the benefit program are to be utilized. The Alabama
2 Commission on Higher Education shall set up minimum standards
3 for performance that must be met in order to maintain
4 eligibility for the continuation of the receipt of tuition
5 grants under this article."

6 "§31-10-4.

7 "In order to be eligible to receive tuition grants
8 under this article, the member must meet the following minimum
9 requirements:

10 "(1) Be an active member of the Alabama National
11 Guard and must have completed basic training ~~and advanced~~
12 ~~individual training.~~

13 "(2) The member must be a member in good standing
14 with the Alabama National Guard as prescribed by regulations
15 promulgated by the Department of the Army, Department of the
16 Air Force, and the Military Department of the State of
17 Alabama, at the time of application and during the entire
18 semester or quarter for which benefits are received.

19 "(3) In the event the individual's service in the
20 Alabama National Guard is terminated or his or her service
21 becomes unsatisfactory while receiving or for four years after
22 receiving the benefits afforded by this program, the benefits
23 will be terminated and repaid by the individual on a pro rata
24 basis. After termination for the above causes, an individual
25 will be ineligible for any further benefits under this
26 article. If for any reason an individual is dismissed from any
27 school for academic or disciplinary reasons, he is ineligible

1 for further benefits from this program. The Alabama Commission
2 on Higher Education shall be the final authority for making
3 such determinations.

4 "(4) The Alabama Commission on Higher Education of
5 the State of Alabama shall be responsible for the promulgation
6 of rules and regulations for the administration and
7 implementation of this article including rules and regulations
8 providing for the selection of persons to receive benefits
9 under this article. The Alabama Commission on Higher Education
10 of the State of Alabama shall be the final authority in
11 determining eligible applicants.

12 "(5) The Adjutant General of the State of Alabama
13 shall serve as an advisor to the Alabama Commission on Higher
14 Education for the purpose of determining the eligibility of
15 members of the Alabama National Guard to receive benefits
16 under this article."

17 "§31-10-21.

18 "(a) Any active member of the Alabama National Guard
19 ~~who has successfully completed advanced individual training or~~
20 ~~commissioning~~ shall be entitled to the tuition benefits
21 provided by this article upon his or her enrollment in a
22 degree ~~objective~~ or certificate program in any community or
23 ~~junior~~ technical college that is under the authority of the
24 ~~State Board of Education~~ Alabama Community College System
25 Board of Trustees, or enrollment in pursuit of his or her
26 first undergraduate degree ~~objective~~ in any public
27 baccalaureate-awarding college or university within the state.

1 Certification and eligibility for the tuition benefits
2 provided by this article shall be determined by the State
3 Education Services Office of the Alabama National Guard which
4 shall promulgate and implement administrative rules and
5 procedures that it deems necessary to carry out and monitor
6 the tuition benefits provided by this article.

7 "(b) Any active member of the Alabama National Guard
8 who enrolls utilizing the tuition benefits provided by this
9 article shall complete the requirements for an undergraduate
10 degree no later than 10 years from the date of initial
11 enrollment or the active member shall be responsible for all
12 costs of any further studies required to attain his or her
13 degree. Active member must currently have and maintain an
14 overall C average, or the grade point equivalent thereof, at
15 the end of each term. Failure to do so shall result in the
16 termination of the tuition benefits provided by this article.
17 If a student withdraws, declares academic bankruptcy, or is
18 granted a grade waiver through a forgiveness program, he or
19 she is responsible for paying back that portion of tuition and
20 fees the state paid on his or her behalf.

21 "(c) Each educational institution that enrolls an
22 active member of the Alabama National Guard who is eligible
23 for the tuition benefits provided by this article shall take
24 necessary action to insure that the active member is aware of
25 all benefits that he or she may be entitled to under the
26 Montgomery G.I. Bill, any other VA educational benefits, any
27 student grant or scholarship, the Active Duty Tuition

1 Assistance Program, and the Alabama National Guard Education
2 Assistance Program. In order to receive the tuition benefits
3 provided by this article, the active member of the Alabama
4 National Guard shall take the necessary steps to utilize all
5 of the above benefits."

6 "§31-10-22.

7 "The tuition benefits provided by this article may
8 be terminated for the following reasons:

9 "(i) Failure to satisfactorily complete the Alabama
10 National Guard military obligation.

11 "(ii) Failure to maintain a 90 percent attendance at
12 annual training and drill assemblies as required by the
13 Alabama National Guard.

14 "(iii) Four unsatisfactory ~~drill performances~~ Unit
15 Training Assemblies in a calendar year while enrolled in the
16 tuition benefits program provided by this article."

17 Section 2. (a) Any member of the Alabama National
18 Guard enrolled in a program leading to a certificate, or an
19 associate or bachelor's degree at an accredited public
20 institution of higher education, technical college, or
21 community college within the State of Alabama shall be exempt
22 from all tuition and fees imposed by the institution if the
23 applicant for the tuition and fees exemption under the act
24 meets the following requirements:

25 (1) The individual is 17 years of age or over.

26 (2) The individual is a member of the Alabama
27 National Guard in good standing throughout the period or

1 semester for which that individual receives education benefits
2 as indicated by continued satisfactory participation in the
3 Alabama National Guard as required by all applicable laws and
4 regulations of the Department of the Army, the Department of
5 the Air Force, and the Alabama National Guard, and there is no
6 unfavorable administrative action pending against him or her.

7 (b) Any member of the Alabama National Guard
8 enrolled in an institution of higher education and receiving
9 benefits under this program shall maintain an overall grade
10 point average of a 2.0 or above and shall earn a grade no
11 lower than a "C" in any class or course allowed under the act.

12 (c) This exemption shall apply only after all
13 applicable federal and state tuition assistance or aid have
14 been applied to the individual's student account, and only for
15 classes or courses that count towards the individual's degree
16 or certificate plan as designed and approved by the college or
17 institution attended for the individual's declared program of
18 study.

19 (d) No public institution of higher education in
20 this state shall impose a nonresident tuition rate or
21 differential out-of-state resident fee on an Alabama National
22 Guard member in good standing and who meets the requirements
23 of subsection (a).

24 (e) All requirements under subsections (a) and (b)
25 shall be met as a condition of obtaining any education
26 assistance benefits under the act and continued eligibility
27 for this exemption.

1 Section 3. (a) The Adjutant General of the Alabama
2 National Guard shall be responsible for administering the
3 overall policies, guidance, implementation, and proper
4 utilization of the exemption under this section.

5 (b) The tuition exemption under this act shall be
6 claimed for no more than a total of 120 academic hours or
7 until the receipt of the first degree for which the exemption
8 is used, whichever comes first.

9 (c) Any member of the Alabama National Guard who
10 fails to remain in good standing or is terminated from further
11 service in the Alabama National Guard shall no longer be
12 eligible for exemption benefits under this section and any
13 benefits received by the member for the period, semester, or
14 term in which he or she becomes ineligible shall be repaid by
15 the member to the exempting institution.

16 (d) Any member who is expelled or dismissed by an
17 institution of higher learning that provides exemption
18 benefits under this section to that member shall no longer be
19 eligible for exemption benefits under this section and shall
20 repay all benefits received under this section to the
21 exempting institution.

22 (e) Any member who is disqualified from serving in
23 the Alabama National Guard due solely to medical reasons shall
24 be exempt from repaying any benefits received under this
25 section.

26 Section 4. The Alabama Disabled Veterans' Dependents
27 Education Advisory Committee is hereby created as an appointed

1 group responsible for monitoring and studying the effect of
2 changes in eligibility for dependents of disabled veterans to
3 the cost of the program as administered by the Department of
4 Veterans Affairs, and the progress of dependents of disabled
5 veteran's in attaining their degree objectives while attending
6 institutions under the authority of the Alabama Commission on
7 Higher Education and the Alabama Community College System. The
8 Department of Veterans Affairs and the Alabama Commission on
9 Higher Education shall provide information and support as
10 required by the committee.

11 Section 5. The committee shall consist of the
12 following members and shall reflect the racial, gender,
13 geographic, urban and rural, and economic diversity of the
14 state:

15 (1) Two members appointed by the Governor.

16 (2) One member appointed by the Lieutenant Governor.

17 (3) One member appointed by the Speaker of the House
18 of Representatives.

19 (4) One member appointed by the President Pro
20 Tempore of the Senate.

21 (5) One member appointed by the Chairman of the
22 Senate Finance and Taxation Education Committee.

23 (6) One member appointed by the Chairman of the
24 House Ways and Means Education Committee.

25 (7) One member appointed by the Chairman of the
26 Alabama Commission on Higher Education.

1 (8) One member appointed by the Board of Trustees of
2 the Alabama Community College System.

3 Section 6. The committee shall meet within 30 days
4 after the appointment of the committee membership and
5 establish procedures and other policies necessary to carry on
6 the business of the committee, including the establishment of
7 a quorum. The committee shall meet at least twice a year, but
8 may meet more frequently upon the call of the chair. Members
9 of the committee may participate in a meeting of the committee
10 by means of conference telephone, video conference, or similar
11 communications equipment by means of which all persons
12 participating in the meeting may hear each other at the same
13 time. Participation by such means shall constitute presence in
14 person at a meeting for all purposes, including the
15 establishment of a quorum.

16 Section 7. Members of the committee shall serve at
17 the pleasure of the official responsible for designating the
18 members, but in no case shall the term of any member exceed
19 four years. Vacancies shall be filled in the manner provided
20 for the original appointments. Persons appointed to fill
21 vacancies shall serve the unexpired portions of the terms.

22 Section 8. The members of the committee shall not
23 receive a salary or per diem allowance for serving as members
24 of the council, and shall not be entitled to reimbursement for
25 expenses incurred in the performance of the duties.

1 Section 9. The committee shall report to the
2 Legislature on its findings and advisory recommendations, by
3 the tenth legislative day of each session.

4 Section 10. This act shall become effective on the
5 first day of the third month following its passage and
6 approval by the Governor, or its otherwise becoming law.

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Senate

Read for the first time and referred to the Senate
committee on Finance and Taxation Education 14-MAR-17

Read for the second time and placed on the calen-
dar..... 15-MAR-17

Read for the third time and passed as amended 04-APR-17

Yeas 27
Nays 0

Patrick Harris,
Secretary.