

Introduced by

Representatives Oversen, Amerman, Dockter, Fehr, Hunskor, Seibel

Senators Carlisle, Dotzenrod, Marcellais

1 A BILL for an Act to create and enact a new chapter to title 15 of the North Dakota Century
2 Code, relating to the creation of a veteran scholarship program; and to provide an appropriation.

3 **BE IT ENACTED BY THE LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY OF NORTH DAKOTA:**

4 **SECTION 1.** A new chapter to title 15 of the North Dakota Century Code is created and
5 enacted as follows:

6 **State board for veteran scholarships.**

7 There is established a state board for veteran scholarships consisting of the commissioner
8 of the department of veterans' affairs, a member at large appointed by the administrative
9 committee on veterans affairs, and the adjutant general or the adjutant general's designee. The
10 commissioner of the department of veterans' affairs shall serve as chairperson and the adjutant
11 general or the adjutant general's designee shall serve as secretary of the board for veteran
12 scholarships. The department of veterans' affairs shall request scholarship funds and related
13 administrative funding for the veteran scholarship program in the department's biennial budget
14 request.

15 **Duties of board.**

16 The state board for veteran scholarships shall:

- 17 1. Award scholarship grants as provided in this chapter.
- 18 2. Make necessary rules and establish standards, requirements, and procedures for the
19 administration of this chapter.
- 20 3. Encourage veterans to attend and graduate from an accredited institution of higher
21 education within this state, and to make application for scholarships.

22 **Number and nature of scholarships.**

23 The state board for veteran scholarships shall provide scholarships each year for veterans
24 so selected to enter and attend any accredited institution of higher education within this state

1 upon compliance with all requirements for admission and to pursue any undergraduate degree
2 program or graduate degree program in such institutions.

3 **Eligibility of candidates - Determination.**

4 The initial and continuing scholarship eligibility of veterans must be determined by the state
5 board for veteran scholarships after the candidate has gained admission to an accredited
6 institution of higher education within this state and has had this fact certified to the board. An
7 eligible veteran must be a North Dakota high school graduate or a resident of North Dakota for
8 a minimum of five years. The board may set additional eligibility requirements.

9 **Definition of veteran.**

10 As used in this chapter, "veteran" means an individual who served in the armed forces of
11 the United States on federal active duty for at least one hundred eighty days or the full period of
12 which the individual is called or ordered to active duty for reasons other than training and who
13 has been discharged under other than dishonorable conditions. For purposes of this chapter,
14 veteran also means a qualifying individual of the North Dakota national guard.

15 **Scholarship payments - Conditions.**

16 Upon the granting of a scholarship and acceptance thereof, the recipient is eligible for a
17 credit in fees in the enrolling accredited institution of higher education to apply toward the cost
18 of registration, health, activities, board, books, and other necessary items not to exceed one
19 thousand five hundred dollars per academic year or seven hundred fifty dollars per semester for
20 two semesters, in any academic year. Veterans who are enrolled at an accredited institution of
21 higher education on a part-time basis are eligible for a scholarship on a prorated basis. The
22 state board for veteran scholarships may prorate the amount of any scholarship based on funds
23 available. After the enrolling institution has deducted the amount due such institution, the
24 remaining balance must be given to the recipient for necessary expenses during the semester.
25 At the beginning of each semester of a regular academic year, the state board for veteran
26 scholarships shall certify to the department of veterans' affairs the name of each recipient and
27 the amount payable, and the department of veterans' affairs shall pay the amount of the
28 scholarship to the accredited institution of higher education in which the recipient is enrolled.
29 Renewal of the scholarship award is subject to the maintenance of a minimum grade point
30 average of 2.0 on a 4.0 scale. The recipient is eligible to receive the scholarship for a maximum
31 of eight semesters for an undergraduate degree program and an additional eight semesters for

1 graduate or professional degree program. The state board for veteran scholarships may set
2 additional conditions.

3 **SECTION 2. APPROPRIATION.** There is appropriated out of any moneys in the student
4 loan trust fund in the state treasury, not otherwise appropriated, the sum of \$3,000,000, or so
5 much of the sum as may be necessary, to the department of veterans' affairs for the purpose of
6 providing scholarship grants and defraying the related administrative expenses of the veteran
7 scholarship program, for the biennium beginning July 1, 2015, and ending June 30, 2017.