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STATE OF RHODE ISLAND

IN GENERAL ASSEMBLY

JANUARY SESSION, A.D. 2025

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A N A C T

RELATING TO MILITARY AFFAIRS AND DEFENSE -- NATIONAL GUARD

Introduced By: Senators Patalano, DiMario, Ciccone, Appollonio, Thompson, Tikoian,  
Lawson, Burke, Britto, and Urso  
Date Introduced: March 07, 2025

Referred To: Senate Special Legislation and Veterans Affairs

It is enacted by the General Assembly as follows:

1           SECTION 1. Section 30-3-40.3 of the General Laws in Chapter 30-3 entitled "National  
2   Guard" is hereby amended to read as follows:

3           **30-3-40.3. Educational benefits for National Guard members.**

4           (a) Any person who is an active member in good standing of the Rhode Island national  
5   guard, and who is eligible to attend at any state college or university in Rhode Island, will be eligible  
6   for a tuition assistance educational benefit amounting to five (5) courses per semester at any Rhode  
7   Island state college or university. [National Guard members may allocate their state-sponsored](#)  
8   [tuition assistance benefits to their dependents. Dependents are defined as immediate family](#)  
9   [members enrolled in the Defense Enrollment Eligibility Reporting System \(DEERS\).](#) Basic tuition  
10   or general fee charges to be waived for said five (5) courses. Each of the state colleges or  
11   universities shall receive an equal share of the educational account funding for Rhode Island  
12   national guard members, the account to be administered by the office of the adjutant general. The  
13   exact amount for each institution shall be determined by the board of governors. The total amount  
14   of funds in the education account shall not exceed one hundred thousand dollars (\$100,000) in any  
15   fiscal year.

16          (b) In order to be eligible for tuition waivers for themselves or their dependent, a person must  
17   remain a member in good standing in the Rhode Island national guard and a student in good  
18   standing at any state college or university. A member in good standing is defined as any soldier or  
19   airperson of the Rhode Island national guard who is currently satisfactorily participating in all unit

1 training assemblies and annual training periods, as so certified by the adjutant general.

2 (c) Those guard members wishing to participate in this program must enter into a

3 contractual enlistment commitment that provides for one year of obligated service in the Rhode

4 Island national guard for each twelve (12) course credits or four (4) three-credit (3) courses where

5 the soldier's or airperson's or their dependents tuition will be waived. Such assistance shall be

6 available for courses creditable to associate, bachelor's, or master's degrees. Failure to

7 satisfactorily fulfill the service obligation incurred in return for tuition assistance will require the

8 participant to repay a pro-rata share of said assistance. This obligation shall be considered to be a

9 debt owed to the state and may be satisfied by offset against any state transfer payments or state

10 income tax refunds. The participating member shall reimburse the Rhode Island national guard

11 when any of the following occur: the soldier fails to participate satisfactorily as a member of the

12 Rhode Island national guard; the soldier withdraws from, or fails to complete, a course for personal

13 reasons; the soldier fails to make up an incomplete grade within time limits stipulated by the

14 institution or one hundred twenty (120) days after the completion of the class, whichever occurs

15 first; or the soldier fails to provide the adjutant general a copy of the grade report within thirty (30)

16 days of course completion and may be subject to punishment under the Rhode Island military code.

17 SECTION 2. This act shall take effect upon passage.

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EXPLANATION  
BY THE LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL  
OF  
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- 1           This would allow the dependents of a National Guard member, who is in good standing, to  
2 be eligible for tuition assistance.  
3           This act would take effect upon passage.

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