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STATE OF RHODE ISLAND

IN GENERAL ASSEMBLY

JANUARY SESSION, A.D. 2026

AN ACT

RELATING TO MILITARY AFFAIRS AND DEFENSE -- MILITARY CHILD ACT

Introduced By: Senators Felag, Raptakis, Burke, LaMountain, Murray, and Vargas

Date Introduced: January 30, 2026

Referred To: Senate Special Legislation and Veterans Affairs

It is enacted by the General Assembly as follows:

1 SECTION 1. Title 30 of the General Laws entitled "MILITARY AFFAIRS AND
2 DEFENSE" is hereby amended by adding thereto the following chapter:

CHAPTER 30.3

THE MILITARY CHILD ACT

30-30.3-1. Short title.

6 This chapter shall be known and may be cited as the "Military Child Act."

30-30.3-2. Definitions.

As used in this chapter:

9 (1) "Military-connected student" means a student who is the dependent of either a person
10 in the active military service of the United States or in a full-time status during active service with
11 a force of the Rhode Island national guard.

30-30.3-3. Advance enrollment.

13 A military-connected student whose parent or guardian is being relocated to this state under
14 military orders and is transferred to or is pending transfer to a military installation within the state,
15 shall be deemed to be a resident pupil of a school system of a city or town for the purposes of
16 enrollment. The Rhode Island board of education shall permit military-connected students to enroll
17 preliminarily by remote registration without charge and shall not require the parents or guardians
18 of the military-connected student or the student to physically appear at a location within the district
19 to register the student, if the parents or guardians present evidence of military orders that a parent

1 or guardian shall be stationed in this state during the current or following school year. The parents
2 or guardians may use an address within the school district where the military-connected student is
3 to be enrolled of a temporary on-base billeting facility, a purchased or leased home or apartment,
4 or federal government or public-private venture off-base military housing. Proof of required
5 residency shall not be required at the time of the remote registration but shall be required within
6 ten (10) days of the student's attendance in the school system of the city or town where the student
7 resides.

8 **30-30.3-4. Open enrollment.**

9 (a) Military-connected students who are the dependent children of a member of the active
10 uniformed military services of the United States on full-time active-duty status and students who
11 are the dependent children of a member of the military reserve on active duty orders shall be eligible
12 for admission to the school district of their choice regardless of the capacity of the district.

13 (b) Students shall be eligible if:

14 (1) At least one parent of the student has a Department of Defense-issued identification
15 card; and

16 (2) At least one parent can provide evidence that the parent shall be on active duty status
17 or active duty orders, meaning the parent shall be temporarily transferred in compliance with
18 official orders to another location in support of combat, contingency operation or a natural disaster
19 requiring the use of orders for more than thirty (30) consecutive days.

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

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EXPLANATION
BY THE LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL
OF
A N A C T
RELATING TO MILITARY AFFAIRS AND DEFENSE -- MILITARY CHILD ACT

- 1 This act would define "military-connected student", "advance enrollment" and "open enrollment" to give the military connected student flexibility in choosing a school district.
- 2
- 3 This act would take effect upon passage.

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