

Senate Bill 253

Sponsored by Senator ROBINSON (Pre-session filed.)

SUMMARY

The following summary is not prepared by the sponsors of the measure and is not a part of the body thereof subject to consideration by the Legislative Assembly. It is an editor's brief statement of the essential features of the measure **as introduced**.

Expands tuition benefits available to disabled veterans to permit veteran who is Oregon resident and 80 percent or more disabled, and spouse and child of disabled veteran, to have tuition waived for enrollment in vocational program or associate degree, baccalaureate degree or master's degree programs at community colleges, public universities and Oregon Health and Science University.

Declares emergency, effective on passage.

A BILL FOR AN ACT

1
2 Relating to tuition benefits connected to disabled veterans; amending ORS 350.285; and declaring
3 an emergency.

4 **Be It Enacted by the People of the State of Oregon:**

5 **SECTION 1.** ORS 350.285 is amended to read:

6 350.285. (1) As used in this section:

7 (a) "Child" means a child, adopted child or stepchild of either a service member or a Purple
8 Heart recipient.

9 (b) "Eligible post-secondary institution" means:

10 (A) A public university listed in ORS 352.002;

11 **(B) A community college operated under ORS chapter 341; and**

12 *[(B)] (C) The Oregon Health and Science University.*

13 (c) "Purple Heart recipient" means a person, alive or deceased, who:

14 (A) Was relieved or discharged from service in the Armed Forces of the United States with ei-
15 ther an honorable discharge or a general discharge under honorable conditions; and

16 (B) Was awarded the Purple Heart in 2001 or thereafter for wounds received in combat.

17 (d) "Qualified student" means a **service member or a child**, a spouse or an unremarried sur-
18 viving spouse of a service member or a child of a Purple Heart recipient.

19 (e) "Service member" means a person who:

20 (A) As a member of the Armed Forces of the United States, died on active duty;

21 (B) As a member of the Armed Forces of the United States, died as a result of a military service
22 connected disability; or

23 (C) Is *[100]* **80 percent or more** disabled as the result of a military service connected disability,
24 as certified by the United States Department of Veterans Affairs or any branch of the Armed Forces
25 of the United States.

26 (2) Subject to subsections (3) to (7) of this section, an eligible post-secondary institution shall
27 waive tuition for a qualified student for courses **in a vocational program or** that may lead to **an**
28 **associate degree**, a baccalaureate degree or a master's degree. A qualified student *[who received*
29 *a tuition waiver for a baccalaureate degree may also qualify for a tuition waiver for a master's*
30 *degree]* **may qualify for tuition waivers for multiple programs or degrees under this section.**

NOTE: Matter in **boldfaced** type in an amended section is new; matter *[italic and bracketed]* is existing law to be omitted.
New sections are in **boldfaced** type.

1 (3)(a) The maximum waiver granted under this section shall be as follows:

2 (A) **For a vocational program, the total number of credit hours required to complete the**
 3 **program.**

4 (B) **For an associate degree, the total number of credit hours that equals two years of**
 5 **full-time attendance at an eligible post-secondary institution.**

6 [(A)] (C) For a baccalaureate degree, the total number of credit hours that equals four years
 7 of full-time attendance at an eligible post-secondary institution.

8 [(B)] (D) For a master’s degree, the total number of credit hours that equals two years of full-
 9 time attendance at an eligible post-secondary institution.

10 (b) Notwithstanding paragraph (a) of this subsection, a waiver may not exceed the total number
 11 of credit hours the qualified student needs to graduate **from a vocational program or with an**
 12 **associate degree, [with] a baccalaureate degree or a master’s degree.**

13 (4) A waiver may be granted under this section only for credit hours for courses that are offered
 14 by an eligible post-secondary institution and are available for enrollment.

15 (5) A qualified student may receive a waiver under this section if the student:

16 (a) At the time of application for a waiver, is considered a resident of this state for the purpose
 17 of determining tuition to be paid at an eligible post-secondary institution; and

18 (b) Has been admitted to an eligible post-secondary institution for **a vocational program, an**
 19 **associate degree program or** a baccalaureate degree program or has been admitted to a master’s
 20 degree program at an eligible post-secondary institution.

21 (6)(a) A child who applies for a waiver under this section must be 23 years of age or younger
 22 at the time the child applies for a waiver.

23 (b) Notwithstanding paragraph (a) of this subsection, a child who is older than 23 years of age
 24 is eligible for a waiver for a master’s degree if the child:

25 (A) Applied for and received a waiver for a baccalaureate degree when the child was 23 years
 26 of age or younger; and

27 (B) Applied for a waiver for a master’s degree within 12 months of receiving a baccalaureate
 28 degree.

29 (7)(a) The amount of tuition waived under this section may be reduced by the amount of any
 30 federal aid scholarships or grants, awards from the Oregon Opportunity Grant program established
 31 under ORS 348.205, or any other aid from the eligible post-secondary institution, received by the
 32 qualified student.

33 (b) The amount of tuition waived under this section may not be reduced by the amount of any
 34 Survivors’ and Dependents’ Educational Assistance under 38 U.S.C. chapter 35 paid to a qualified
 35 student.

36 **SECTION 2. This 2023 Act being necessary for the immediate preservation of the public**
 37 **peace, health and safety, an emergency is declared to exist, and this 2023 Act takes effect**
 38 **on its passage.**