

SENATE BILL 2093

By Green

AN ACT to amend Tennessee Code Annotated, Title 49 and Title 71, relative to dependent children of veterans and armed services personnel.

BE IT ENACTED BY THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF THE STATE OF TENNESSEE:

SECTION 1. Tennessee Code Annotated, Section 49-6-101(f)(1), is amended by deleting subdivisions (A) and (B) in their entirety and instead substituting the following:

(A) Dependent children, as defined by § 49-7-102 (c), who are three (3) and four (4) years of age whose parent was killed, died as a direct result of injuries received or has been officially reported as being either a prisoner of war or missing in action while serving honorably as a member of the United States armed forces during a qualifying period of armed conflict as defined by § 49-7-102 (c), or was formerly a prisoner of war or missing in action under such circumstances, who can present the following:

(i) Official certification from the United States government that the parent veteran was killed or died as a direct result of injuries received while serving honorably as a member of the United States armed forces during a qualifying period of armed conflict; or

(ii) Official certification from the United States government that the parent veteran has been officially reported as being a prisoner of war or missing in action while serving honorably as a member of the United States armed forces during a qualifying period of armed conflict or was formerly a prisoner of war or missing in action under such circumstances as appropriate within one hundred and eighty (180) days prior to applying for services under this subdivision (f)(1);

(B) Children who are four (4) years of age on or before September 30 and from families with incomes that meet the eligibility requirements for free and reduced lunch as determined pursuant to 42 U.S.C. § 1771; and

(C) Subject to availability of space and resources:

(i) Children who are three (3) and four (4) years of age and who are screened and identified as educationally at-risk, determined pursuant to 20 U.S.C. § 1400 et seq.;

(ii) Children who are three (3) and four (4) years of age who have been in the Tennessee Early Intervention Program (TEIS) or Even Start program; and

(iii) Children three (3) years of age and from families with incomes that meet the eligibility requirements for free and reduced lunch as determined pursuant to 42 U.S.C. § 1771.

SECTION 2. Tennessee Code Annotated, Section 71-3-518, is amended by deleting the section in its entirety and instead substituting the following:

(a) Unless otherwise prohibited by federal or state law, no child care agency licensed under this part shall place a dependent child on a wait list behind a child without a parent or legal guardian serving on active duty in the armed services of the United States, if the dependent child:

(1) Has a parent or legal guardian that is an active-duty member of the armed services of the United States; or

(2) Has a parent who was killed, died as a direct result of injuries received or has been officially reported as being either a prisoner of war or missing in action while serving honorably as a member of the United States armed forces during a qualifying period of armed conflict or was formerly a prisoner of war or missing in action under such circumstances.

(b) To be eligible under section (a), the dependent child or the legal guardian of the dependent child shall:

(1) Present official certification from the United States government that the parent veteran was killed or died as a direct result of injuries received while serving honorably as a member of the United States armed forces during a qualifying period of armed conflict; or

(2) Present official certification from the United States government that the parent veteran has been officially reported as being a prisoner of war or missing in action while serving honorably as a member of the United States armed forces during a qualifying period of armed conflict or was formerly a prisoner of war or missing in action under such circumstances as appropriate within one hundred and eighty (180) days prior to applying for child care services.

(c) As used in this section, “dependent child”, “qualifying period of armed conflict”, and “serving honorably” have the same meanings as in § 49-7-102.

SECTION 3. This act shall take effect upon becoming a law, the public welfare requiring it.