

SB 689 STAFF MEASURE SUMMARY

Senate Committee On Veterans and Emergency Preparedness

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Sub-Referral To: Senate Committee On Education

Meeting Dates: 3/13, 3/20

WHAT THE MEASURE DOES:

Requires dependents of service members who are considered residents at the time of their admission to a community college or public university to remain so for as long as they are continuously enrolled.

ISSUES DISCUSSED:

- Provisions of measure

EFFECT OF AMENDMENT:

No amendment.

BACKGROUND:

A number of higher education benefits are available to qualifying active duty service members, veterans, and their dependents in Oregon. The federal government provides tuition assistance through the G.I. Bill and vocational rehabilitation benefits. Educational assistance is also available for Oregon residents who served in the National Guard or Reserves in an active-duty capacity in a combat zone since September 11, 2001, through the Voyager Tuition Assistance Program. Priority enrollment is available at Oregon institutions of higher education for eligible service members, veterans, and their dependents. Oregon community colleges and universities also provide in-state tuition for eligible veterans at both the graduate and undergraduate levels. Finally, tuition waivers are available for eligible children and spouses to pursue a bachelor's or master's degree for only the cost of fees, pursuant to the Veterans Dependent Tuition Waiver Program. These waivers are available to the dependents of Purple Heart recipients awarded from 2001 going forward; or of veterans who died in active duty or from a disability sustained in active duty; or of veterans who are 100 percent disabled from military service.

Senate Bill 689 permits dependents of service members, who are considered residents at the time of their admission to a community college or public university, to be considered residents for so long as they are continuously enrolled, even if the service member is assigned to duty out-of-state.