

HB 2201 A STAFF MEASURE SUMMARY

House Committee On Veterans and Emergency Preparedness

Action Date: 04/04/19

Action: Do pass with amendments and be referred to Ways and Means. (Printed A-Eng.)

Vote: 8-0-0-0

Yeas: 8 - Evans, Findley, Lewis, Meek, Neron, Wallan, Wilde, Zika

Fiscal: Fiscal impact issued

Revenue: No revenue impact

Prepared By: Patrick Brennan, LPRO Analyst

Meeting Dates: 4/4

WHAT THE MEASURE DOES:

Establishes the Veteran Educational Bridge Grant Program within the Department of Veterans' Affairs to provide grants to veterans who are enrolled in an approved course of study that qualifies for U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs benefits, are eligible to receive federal financial assistance, and are unable to complete a degree program due to one or more required courses not being offered until a later date. Limits grants to \$5,000 per veteran. Establishes the Veteran Educational Bridge Grant Program Fund and allocates \$500,000 from the Veterans' Services Fund for purposes of program. Directs Department to submit report on program status to interim legislative committees by September 15, 2020. Sunsets January 2, 2022.

ISSUES DISCUSSED:

- Product of work group
- Grant program rather than loan program

EFFECT OF AMENDMENT:

Replaces original measure.

BACKGROUND:

There are a number of federal and state programs to assist veterans in furthering their education, either within the university system, professional training, or apprenticeship programs. However, even with multiple programs, there are times when a veteran may not currently qualify for any assistance, leaving them unable to continue their educational training. House Bill 2201-A creates a bridge grant program to provide assistance to veterans who are waiting for a particular course to be offered in order to complete their educational program on time.