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SENATE BILL NO. 601

Offered January 14, 2026

A BILL to amend and reenact § 23.1-610 of the Code of Virginia, relating to Virginia National Guard State Tuition Assistance Program; grants.

Patron—Reeves

Referred to Committee on General Laws and Technology

Be it enacted by the General Assembly of Virginia:

1. That § 23.1-610 of the Code of Virginia is amended and reenacted as follows:

§ 23.1-610. Virginia National Guard State Tuition Assistance Program; grants.

A. Subject to regulations as prescribed by the Adjutant General, any individual who (i) is a member of the Virginia National Guard and has a minimum remaining obligation of two years, (ii) has satisfactorily completed required initial active duty service, (iii) is satisfactorily performing duty in accordance with regulations of the National Guard, and (iv) is enrolled in and in good standing at any public institution of higher education or accredited nonprofit private institution of higher education whose primary purpose is to provide collegiate or graduate education and not to provide religious training or theological education is eligible for a grant in the amount of the difference between the full cost of tuition and any other educational benefits for which he is eligible as a member of the National Guard. Grants provided under this section shall be subject to limitation based on the amount of funds appropriated for such purpose. If applications for grants exceed the amount of funding appropriated, the Department of Military Affairs (the Department) shall issue grants to eligible recipients based on the order in which applications were received.

B. Application for a grant shall be made to the Department no later than 30 days prior to the beginning of an academic semester. The Department shall determine whether an applicant is eligible for the grant as described in subsection A and communicate acceptance and any additional requirements determined by the Department in writing no later than 30 days after receipt of an application. Upon acceptance, grant funds shall be disbursed to the applicable institution of higher education for credit against the recipient's student account.

C. Any member of the Virginia National Guard shall be eligible to receive a grant under this section if such member has two years remaining on his service obligation to the Virginia National Guard as of the last day of the last term or semester for which tuition assistance is requested. Service in the inactive National Guard, the active duty or reserve forces of the United States, or the National Guard of any other state shall not count as applicable service toward fulfilling this service obligation. Federal active duty mobilizations occurring while still a member of the Virginia National Guard and state active duty for the Commonwealth shall count toward the two-year service obligation.

D. The Department may utilize grant funding in order to recruit qualified applicants for service in the Virginia National Guard. The yearly funding amount for such recruitment shall be at the discretion of the Adjutant General and the Department ~~and not exceed~~ *but in no event shall such amount be less than* $50,000 per fiscal year.

INTRODUCED

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