

House Study Bill 716 - Introduced

HOUSE FILE _____
BY (PROPOSED COMMITTEE ON PUBLIC
SAFETY BILL BY CHAIRPERSON
VONDRAN)

A BILL FOR

1 An Act providing for a waiver of resident tuition at community
2 colleges for dependents of first responders.
3 BE IT ENACTED BY THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF THE STATE OF IOWA:

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1 Section 1. NEW SECTION. **261M.1 Short title.**

2 This chapter shall be known and may be cited as the "*First*
3 *Responder Dependent Education Act*".

4 Sec. 2. NEW SECTION. **261M.2 Definitions.**

5 1. "*Associate degree program*" means a degree program offered
6 by a community college that requires completion of at least
7 sixty semester credit hours or an equivalent program of study.
8 "*Associate degree program*" does not include a baccalaureate
9 degree program.

10 2. "*Dependent*" means a child of a first responder who is
11 claimed as a dependent for state or federal tax purposes for the
12 most recent tax year.

13 3. "*Emergency medical care provider*" means an individual
14 certified pursuant to section 147A.6.

15 4. "*Fire fighter*" means a paid or volunteer member of a fire
16 department who is certified under section 100B.6.

17 5. "*First responder*" means a law enforcement officer, fire
18 fighter, or emergency medical care provider.

19 6. "*Law enforcement officer*" means a person who is
20 responsible for the prevention or detection of crime or the
21 enforcement of the criminal, traffic, or highway laws of this
22 state or any political subdivision of this state for more than
23 one hundred hours per year, and who is authorized by law to make
24 arrests.

25 Sec. 3. NEW SECTION. **261M.3 Eligibility for tuition**
26 **waiver.**

27 A community college shall grant a dependent of a first
28 responder a waiver of resident tuition if the dependent does all
29 of the following:

30 1. Meets all admission requirements of the community college.

31 2. Enrolls in the community college and pursues studies
32 leading to any of the following:

33 a. An associate degree related to a career in public safety
34 or emergency response.

35 b. A degree or credential in a high-demand job as determined

1 by the workforce development board pursuant to section 84A.1B,
2 subsection 3.

3 3. Submits verification that the dependent's parent or legal
4 guardian is an active first responder in Iowa at the time of the
5 dependent's initial application for a waiver. Verification must
6 include a certificate of satisfactory performance from the first
7 responder's supervisor within the employing agency.

8 Sec. 4. NEW SECTION. **261M.4 Waiver amount and duration.**

9 1. The amount of a waiver under this chapter shall be
10 the amount of the dependent's resident tuition remaining after
11 subtracting all of the following received by the dependent:

12 a. Any federal grants.

13 b. Any state scholarships and grants.

14 c. Any awards from the future ready Iowa skilled workforce
15 last-dollar scholarship program under section 256.228.

16 2. An eligible dependent may receive the tuition waiver for
17 no more than two academic years, provided the dependent continues
18 to meet the requirements of this chapter and all policies of
19 the community college on continued enrollment and progress toward
20 completion of the applicable degree or program.

21 Sec. 5. NEW SECTION. **261M.5 In-state residency**
22 **requirement.**

23 1. As a condition of receiving a tuition waiver under this
24 chapter, a dependent shall remain a resident of the state of Iowa
25 for a period of not less than five years following completion of
26 the degree or program for which the waiver was received.

27 2. A dependent who voluntarily relocates outside the state
28 before completing the required five-year period shall repay to
29 the community college the prorated amount of tuition waived on
30 the dependent's behalf. The community college shall determine
31 the prorated repayment amount based on the portion of the
32 five-year residency obligation not completed.

33 3. Repayment under this section shall not be required if the
34 dependent's relocation is due to death, permanent disability, or
35 other good cause as determined by the community college.

1 4. If a first responder dies in the line of duty after the
2 dependent's initial application for a waiver is submitted, the
3 dependent shall remain eligible for the tuition waiver and shall
4 not be subject to subsection 1.

5 5. A community college shall adopt procedures for monitoring
6 compliance with this section and for administering repayment
7 obligations.

8 Sec. 6. IMPLEMENTATION OF ACT. Section 25B.2, subsection 3,
9 shall not apply to this Act.

10

EXPLANATION

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The inclusion of this explanation does not constitute agreement with

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the explanation's substance by the members of the general assembly.

13 This bill provides for a waiver of resident tuition at
14 community colleges for dependents of first responders. The
15 bill defines first responder as a law enforcement officer, fire
16 fighter, or emergency medical care provider.

17 The bill requires a community college to grant a dependent of
18 a first responder a waiver of resident tuition if the dependent
19 meets admission requirements, enrolls in the community college
20 and pursues studies leading to a specified degree or credential,
21 and submits verification that the dependent's parent or legal
22 guardian is an active first responder in Iowa at the time of the
23 dependent's initial application for a waiver.

24 The amount of a waiver under the bill is the amount of
25 the dependent's resident tuition remaining after subtracting
26 federal grants, state scholarships and grants, and awards from
27 the future ready Iowa skilled workforce last-dollar scholarship
28 program received by the dependent. The bill provides that an
29 eligible dependent may receive the tuition waiver for no more
30 than two academic years, provided the dependent continues to meet
31 the requirements of the bill and all policies of the community
32 college on continued enrollment and progress toward completion of
33 the applicable degree or program.

34 As a condition of receiving a tuition waiver, the bill
35 requires the dependent to remain a resident of Iowa for a period

1 of not less than five years following completion of the degree
2 or program for which the waiver was received. The bill provides
3 for repayment to a community college of the amount waived if
4 a dependent voluntarily relocates outside the state and for
5 exceptions to the repayment requirement.

6 The bill may include a state mandate as defined in Code
7 section 25B.3. The bill makes inapplicable Code section 25B.2,
8 subsection 3, which would relieve a political subdivision from
9 complying with a state mandate if funding for the cost of the
10 state mandate is not provided or specified. Therefore, political
11 subdivisions are required to comply with any state mandate
12 included in the bill.

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