

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:

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
12 the 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
24 make arrests.

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

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

29 1. Meets all admission requirements of the community
30 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
4 legal guardian is an active first responder in Iowa at the
5 time of the dependent's initial application for a waiver.
6 Verification must include a certificate of satisfactory
7 performance from the first responder's supervisor within the
8 employing agency.

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

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

13 a. Any federal grants.

14 b. Any state scholarships and grants.

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

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

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

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

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

34 3. Repayment under this section shall not be required if the
35 dependent's relocation is due to death, permanent disability,

1 or other good cause as determined by the community college.

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

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

9 Sec. 6. IMPLEMENTATION OF ACT. Section 25B.2, subsection
10 3, shall not apply to this Act.

11 EXPLANATION

12 The inclusion of this explanation does not constitute agreement with
13 the explanation's substance by the members of the general assembly.

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

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

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

1 As a condition of receiving a tuition waiver, the bill
2 requires the dependent to remain a resident of Iowa for a
3 period of not less than five years following completion of the
4 degree or program for which the waiver was received. The bill
5 provides for repayment to a community college of the amount
6 waived if a dependent voluntarily relocates outside the state
7 and for exceptions to the repayment requirement.

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