

CHAPTER 274

EDUCATION - POSTSECONDARY

HOUSE BILL 17-1004

BY REPRESENTATIVE(S) Michaelson Jenet and Danielson, Arndt, Becker J., Becker K., Beckman, Benavidez, Bridges, Buck, Buckner, Carver, Catlin, Coleman, Covarrubias, Esgar, Everett, Foote, Garnett, Ginal, Gray, Hamner, Hansen, Herod, Hooton, Humphrey, Jackson, Kennedy, Kraft-Tharp, Landgraf, Lawrence, Lebsock, Lee, Leonard, Lewis, Liston, Lontine, Lundeen, McKean, McLachlan, Melton, Mitsch Bush, Navarro, Neville P., Nordberg, Pettersen, Rankin, Ransom, Rosenthal, Saine, Salazar, Sias, Singer, Thurlow, Valdez, Van Winkle, Weissman, Willett, Williams D., Wilson, Winter, Wist, Young, Duran, Exum, Pabon; also SENATOR(S) Hill and Garcia, Aguilar, Baumgardner, Cooke, Coram, Court, Crowder, Donovan, Fenberg, Fields, Gardner, Holbert, Jahn, Jones, Kagan, Kefalas, Kerr, Lambert, Lundberg, Marble, Martinez Humenik, Merrifield, Moreno, Neville T., Priola, Scott, Smallwood, Sonnenberg, Tate, Todd, Williams A., Zenzinger, Grantham.

AN ACT**CONCERNING A STATEWIDE POLICY FOR AWARDING COLLEGE CREDIT FOR MILITARY EDUCATION AND TRAINING.**

Be it enacted by the General Assembly of the State of Colorado:

SECTION 1. Legislative declaration. (1) The general assembly finds and declares that:

(a) Many Coloradans currently serve in the Armed Forces, and Colorado is home to more than 400,000 veterans;

(b) These members of our community spend significant time receiving training and education for jobs serving our country and safeguarding our freedom and liberty;

(c) The Armed Forces invest taxpayer dollars to provide high-quality education and training to service members;

(d) Upon separation from the military, former service members are offered a GI bill;

(e) The GI bill generally covers only thirty-six months of education, and guidance targeted to veterans is necessary to ensure the optimal use of these limited GI

Capital letters indicate new material added to existing statutes; dashes through words indicate deletions from existing statutes and such material not part of act.

benefits; and

(f) Veterans face an increased risk of poverty and failure to complete their postsecondary education if they are placed in college courses without appropriate recognition of college-level learning acquired while in the military and targeted guidance from the institution to ensure that GI bill benefits are used effectively to complete a chosen program of study.

(2) Now, therefore, by requiring state institutions of higher education to adopt a policy for awarding credit for college-level learning acquired in the military and provide appropriate guidance to veterans, Colorado can ensure an easier pathway to career and financial success for our veterans.

SECTION 2. In Colorado Revised Statutes, **add 23-5-145** as follows:

23-5-145. Credit for military education and training - policy - repeal. (1) As USED IN THIS SECTION, UNLESS THE CONTEXT OTHERWISE REQUIRES, "STATE INSTITUTION OF HIGHER EDUCATION" OR "INSTITUTION" HAS THE SAME MEANING AS PROVIDED IN SECTION 23-18-102(10); EXCEPT THAT "STATE INSTITUTION OF HIGHER EDUCATION" OR "INSTITUTION" INCLUDES EACH LOCAL DISTRICT COLLEGE THAT IS PART OF A LOCAL COLLEGE DISTRICT ORGANIZED PURSUANT TO ARTICLE 71 OF THIS TITLE 23 AND THE AREA TECHNICAL COLLEGES, AS DEFINED IN SECTION 23-60-103.

(2) ON OR BEFORE JANUARY 1, 2018, EACH GOVERNING BOARD OF A STATE INSTITUTION OF HIGHER EDUCATION SHALL ADOPT, MAKE PUBLIC, AND IMPLEMENT A PRIOR LEARNING ASSESSMENT POLICY FOR AWARDING ACADEMIC CREDIT FOR COLLEGE-LEVEL LEARNING ACQUIRED WHILE IN THE MILITARY. THE POLICY ADOPTED BY THE GOVERNING BOARD MUST REQUIRE EACH CAMPUS OF THE INSTITUTION TO:

(a) USE THE AMERICAN COUNCIL ON EDUCATION'S RECOMMENDATIONS ON THE JOINT SERVICES TRANSCRIPT, AMONG OTHER FACTORS, TO EVALUATE COLLEGE-LEVEL LEARNING ACQUIRED BY A STUDENT WHILE IN THE MILITARY AND, AT THE DISCRETION OF THE CAMPUS, ASSIGN APPROPRIATE PRIOR LEARNING ASSESSMENT CREDIT;

(b) PROVIDE SPECIFIC GUIDANCE TO ACTIVE DUTY AND VETERAN MILITARY MEMBERS IN SELECTING A PROGRAM OF STUDY AND IN OPTIMIZING THE USE OF PRIOR LEARNING ASSESSMENT CREDIT TO ACCELERATE THE STUDENT'S PATH TO DEGREE OR CERTIFICATE COMPLETION IN THE CHOSEN PROGRAM OF STUDY; AND

(c) BEGINNING JUNE 1, 2018, ACCEPT IN TRANSFER FROM WITHIN THE INSTITUTION AND FROM OTHER STATE INSTITUTIONS OF HIGHER EDUCATION PRIOR LEARNING ASSESSMENT CREDIT AWARDED FOR COURSES WITH GUARANTEED-TRANSFER DESIGNATION, UNLESS THE COLORADO COMMISSION ON HIGHER EDUCATION ADOPTS A NEW POLICY PRIOR TO JUNE 1, 2018, CONCERNING THE TRANSFER OF PRIOR LEARNING ASSESSMENT CREDIT FOR COURSES WITH GUARANTEED-TRANSFER DESIGNATION THAT REQUIRES EACH CAMPUS TO ACCEPT IN TRANSFER CREDIT AWARDED BY A STATE INSTITUTION OF HIGHER EDUCATION PURSUANT TO THE PROVISIONS OF SUBSECTION (2)(a) OF THIS SECTION. EACH CAMPUS MAY ALSO ACCEPT OTHER PRIOR LEARNING ASSESSMENT CREDIT TOWARD THE STUDENT'S PROGRAM OF STUDY IF THE CREDIT MEETS STANDARDS ESTABLISHED BY THE

CAMPUS.

(3) THE STATE INSTITUTION OF HIGHER EDUCATION SHALL GRANT PRIOR LEARNING ASSESSMENT CREDIT FREE OF TUITION BUT MAY CHARGE A REASONABLE FEE FOR THE PRIOR LEARNING ASSESSMENT.

(4) (a) DURING THE 2018 REGULAR SESSION, THE DEPARTMENT OF HIGHER EDUCATION SHALL REPORT TO THE EDUCATION AND STATE, VETERANS, AND MILITARY AFFAIRS COMMITTEES OF THE SENATE AND HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES, OR ANY SUCCESSOR COMMITTEES, REGARDING THE ADOPTION AND IMPLEMENTATION OF THE INSTITUTIONS' POLICIES ADOPTED PURSUANT TO THIS SECTION.

(b) THIS SUBSECTION (4) IS REPEALED, EFFECTIVE JULY 1, 2019.

SECTION 3. Safety clause. The general assembly hereby finds, determines, and declares that this act is necessary for the immediate preservation of the public peace, health, and safety.

Approved: June 1, 2017