

CHAPTER 39

MILITARY AND VETERANS

SENATE BILL 03-100

BY SENATOR(S) Entz, Arnold, Isgar, Owen, Taylor, Anderson, Andrews, Cairns, Chlouber, Dyer, Evans, Fitz-Gerald, Gordon, Grossman, Hagedorn, Hanna, Hillman, Johnson S., Jones, Keller, Kester, Lamborn, Linkhart, May R., McElhany, Nichol, Phillips, Reeves, Sandoval, Takis, Tapia, Tate, Teck, Tupa, and Windels;

also REPRESENTATIVE(S) Salazar, Borodkin, Butcher, Cadman, Carroll, Clapp, Cloer, Coleman, Frangas, Garcia, Hefley, Hodge, Jahn, Johnson R., Larson, Lundberg, Madden, Marshall, McFadyen, Merrifield, Miller, Paccione, Plant, Pommer, Ragsdale, Rhodes, Romanoff, Spence, Stafford, Tochtrop, Veiga, Vigil, Weddig, Wiens, Weissmann, Williams S., and Williams T.

AN ACT**CONCERNING HIGH SCHOOL DIPLOMAS AWARDED TO CERTAIN VETERANS.**

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

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

(a) During the 1940's and 1950's, thousands of young men and women answered the call of their country and left high school to serve in the armed forces of the United States;

(b) Those young men and women helped to advance the cause of democracy around the world and helped to build this country into a modern global power;

(c) Many have lauded their sacrifice and selfless dedication and some have even referred to these Americans as the "Greatest Generation";

(d) While these men and women left high school to serve their country, they often returned to lead productive lives and to build their own communities, even though they had not received a high school diploma;

(e) These men and women can achieve a sense of completeness and underscore the importance of a high school education to a new generation by receiving their high school diplomas; and

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

(f) This generation of proud Americans continues to lead by example by seeking to obtain a high school diploma decades after leaving school to serve their country, thereby demonstrating the high value they place on that diploma.

(2) The general assembly further finds and declares that, as an overdue gesture of our country's gratitude and as an acknowledgment of continuous learning and the value of life experience, the awarding of high school diplomas by local boards of education to these men and women is a commendable and worthy endeavor.

SECTION 2. Article 32 of title 22, Colorado Revised Statutes, is amended BY THE ADDITION OF A NEW SECTION to read:

22-32-132. Diplomas - veterans. (1) UPON THE REQUEST OF AN HONORABLY DISCHARGED VETERAN, A BOARD OF EDUCATION OF A SCHOOL DISTRICT MAY AWARD A DIPLOMA TO THE HONORABLY DISCHARGED VETERAN IF HE OR SHE:

(a) SERVED IN THE ARMED FORCES OF THE UNITED STATES AT ANY TIME DURING THE PERIOD FROM:

(I) DECEMBER 7, 1941, THROUGH DECEMBER 31, 1946, A PERIOD THAT INCLUDES WORLD WAR II;

(II) JUNE 25, 1950, THROUGH JANUARY 31, 1955, A PERIOD THAT INCLUDES THE KOREAN WAR; OR

(III) AUGUST 5, 1964, THROUGH MAY 7, 1975, A PERIOD THAT INCLUDES THE VIETNAM WAR, AND THE PERIOD FROM FEBRUARY 28, 1961 THROUGH AUGUST 5, 1964, FOR PERSONS SERVING IN VIETNAM.

(b) LEFT HIGH SCHOOL BEFORE GRADUATING IN ORDER TO SERVE IN THE ARMED FORCES OF THE UNITED STATES;

(c) HAS NOT RECEIVED A HIGH SCHOOL DIPLOMA;

(d) HAS ATTAINED THE AGE OF SIXTY YEARS; AND

(e) (I) AT THE TIME OF MAKING THE REQUEST, RESIDES WITHIN THE SCHOOL DISTRICT; OR

(II) AT THE TIME OF LEAVING HIGH SCHOOL TO SERVE IN THE ARMED FORCES OF THE UNITED STATES, RESIDED WITHIN THE SCHOOL DISTRICT.

(2) NOTWITHSTANDING ANY PROVISION OF SUBSECTION (1) OF THIS SECTION TO THE CONTRARY, A BOARD OF EDUCATION OF A SCHOOL DISTRICT MAY AWARD A DIPLOMA:

(a) POSTHUMOUSLY TO AN HONORABLY DISCHARGED VETERAN, UPON THE REQUEST OF AN IMMEDIATE FAMILY MEMBER OR LEGAL GUARDIAN OF THE HONORABLY DISCHARGED VETERAN; OR

(b) EVEN THOUGH AN HONORABLY DISCHARGED VETERAN HAS ALREADY RECEIVED

A GENERAL EDUCATIONAL DEVELOPMENT HIGH SCHOOL EQUIVALENCY CERTIFICATE.

(3) A SCHOOL DISTRICT, IN IMPLEMENTING THE PROVISIONS OF THIS SECTION, MAY UTILIZE A FORM FOR ACQUIRING THE INFORMATION FROM A VETERAN DESCRIBED IN SUBSECTION(1) OF THIS SECTION. THE FORM MAY BE PRESCRIBED BY RULE PROPOSED BY THE COLORADO BOARD OF VETERANS AFFAIRS AND ADOPTED BY THE ADJUTANT GENERAL IN ACCORDANCE WITH SECTION 28-5-703, C.R.S.

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: March 18, 2003