

AMENDED IN SENATE JUNE 11, 2014

AMENDED IN SENATE MAY 23, 2014

CALIFORNIA LEGISLATURE—2013–14 REGULAR SESSION

**ASSEMBLY BILL**

**No. 1781**

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**Introduced by Assembly Member Linder  
(Coauthors: Assembly Members Chávez, Grove, and Melendez)**

February 18, 2014

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An act to amend Section 69999.16 of the Education Code, relating to postsecondary education.

LEGISLATIVE COUNSEL'S DIGEST

AB 1781, as amended, Linder. California National Guard Education Assistance Award Program.

Existing law establishes the California National Guard Education Assistance Award Program, which provides financial aid to qualifying members of the California National Guard, the State Military Reserve, and the Naval Militia, under the administration of the Student Aid Commission, in consultation with the Military Department. Existing law provides that a qualifying member is eligible to receive an award if, among other conditions, the person enrolls in at least 3 academic units per semester, or the equivalent thereof.

This bill would ~~revise this eligibility condition to specify that it is satisfied by a person enrolling in at least 3 academic units per summer session or intersession term.~~ *provide that a qualifying member who meets those conditions may be eligible to receive an award for a summer session term if the member submits a letter from his or her unit commander that states that the summer session will not adversely impact the member's attendance at mandatory military training.* The bill also

would state ~~various legislative findings, declarations, and intent~~ *the intent of the Legislature* relating to these provisions.

Vote: majority. Appropriation: no. Fiscal committee: yes.  
State-mandated local program: no.

*The people of the State of California do enact as follows:*

1 ~~SECTION 1. The Legislature finds and declares both of the~~  
2 ~~following:~~

3 ~~(a) The California National Guard Education Award Assistance~~  
4 ~~Program is a highly effective student-soldier assistance program~~  
5 ~~emphasizing certification, program, and degree completion.~~

6 ~~(b) Student-soldiers are strongly encouraged to seek available~~  
7 ~~academic advising services to create their academic schedule and~~  
8 ~~program with the goal of working towards a certification or degree.~~

9 ~~SEC. 2.~~

10 *SECTION 1.* It is the intent of the Legislature to build upon  
11 the success of the California National Guard Education Award  
12 Assistance Program by providing student-soldiers more flexibility  
13 in achieving their academic goals.

14 ~~SEC. 3.~~

15 *SEC. 2.* Section 69999.16 of the Education Code is amended  
16 to read:

17 69999.16. (a) Commencing January 1 of the 2009–10 academic  
18 year, and each academic year thereafter, any qualifying member  
19 of the California National Guard, the State Military Reserve, or  
20 the Naval Militia may apply for a California National Guard  
21 Education Assistance Award.

22 (b) (1) A qualifying member shall meet all of the following  
23 conditions to be eligible to receive a California National Guard  
24 Education Assistance Award:

25 (1)

26 (A) The person is a resident within the meaning of Section  
27 68017.

28 (2)

29 (B) The person is an active member of, and has served two years  
30 in, the California National Guard, the State Military Reserve, or  
31 the Naval Militia.

32 (3)

1 (C) The person has been accepted or registered at, or enrolled  
2 in, a qualifying institution, as defined in subdivision (l) of Section  
3 69432.7.

4 ~~(4)~~

5 (D) The person agrees to use the award to obtain a certificate,  
6 degree, or diploma that he or she does not hold at the time he or  
7 she applies for the award, and enrolls in at least three academic  
8 units per semester, or the equivalent thereof, ~~or per summer session~~  
9 ~~or intersession term.~~ *thereof.*

10 ~~(5)~~

11 (E) The person has submitted the Free Application for Federal  
12 Student Aid (FAFSA) to the United States Department of  
13 Education.

14 (2) *To be eligible for an award for a summer session term, a*  
15 *qualifying member who meets the conditions in paragraph (1)*  
16 *shall submit a letter from his or her unit commander that states*  
17 *that the member's enrollment in that summer session will not*  
18 *adversely impact the member's attendance at mandatory military*  
19 *training.*

20 (c) Each person applying for a California National Guard  
21 Education Assistance Award shall submit an application for an  
22 award to the Adjutant General.

23 (d) The Adjutant General shall do all of the following:

24 (1) Annually identify the skills most needed by the California  
25 National Guard to retain members who possess, or seek to possess,  
26 those identified skills.

27 (2) Prioritize those applicants who qualify for an award pursuant  
28 to subdivision (b) based on the skills most needed by the California  
29 National Guard, as identified pursuant to paragraph (1).

30 (3) Select award recipients from among eligible applicants  
31 pursuant to subdivision (e).

32 (4) Certify the eligibility of applicants to the Student Aid  
33 Commission.

34 (5) Notify recipients of their selection for an award.

35 (e) The Adjutant General shall select recipients who have been  
36 judged by the Adjutant General to have outstanding ability on the  
37 basis of criteria that may include, but shall not be limited to, any  
38 of the following:

39 (1) The Military Occupational Specialty Code or the Air Force  
40 Specialty Code.

1 (2) An annual noncommissioned officer evaluation report or  
2 officer evaluation report of the preceding two years.

3 (3) A memorandum from the applicant's commander  
4 recommending the applicant for the award.

5 (4) Commendations the applicant has received.

6 (5) An essay, written by the applicant, explaining why education  
7 is important to the applicant.

8 (f) The number of awards issued by the Student Aid Commission  
9 in any fiscal year shall be limited to the number authorized in the  
10 annual Budget Act for that year, but in no event shall exceed 1,000  
11 in any fiscal year.

12 (g) The Student Aid Commission shall issue the awards in  
13 accordance with Section 69999.18.

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