

State of Arkansas

76th General Assembly

Regular Session, 1987

HOUSE BILL 1286

By: Representatives McCoy, Teague, Wingfield,
Townsend, Mitchum, et al.

"AN ACT TO ALLOW QUALIFIED MEMBERS OF THE ARKANSAS ARMY
NATIONAL GUARD AND AIR NATIONAL GUARD TO ATTEND STATE SUP-
PORTED INSTITUTIONS OF HIGHER EDUCATION AND STATE SUPPORTED
TECHNICAL OR VOCATIONAL SCHOOLS WITHOUT CHARGE FOR TUITION;
AND FOR OTHER PURPOSES."

BE IT ENACTED BY THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF THE STATE OF ARKANSAS:

SECTION 1. The purpose of this Act is to recognize the vital role of the national guard in the State. While the national guard is subject to federal control during periods of national emergency, it is organized, trained, and equipped to perform military functions and to aid civil authorities in the protection of life and property while it is subject to the control of the State. The purpose of this Act is to encourage voluntary membership in the guard, improve the educational level of its members, and thereby benefit the State as a whole.

SECTION 2. (a) "Arkansas National Guard" includes the Arkansas Army National Guard and the Arkansas Air National Guard.

(b) "Qualified member" means a member of the Arkansas National Guard who has served at least one year in the Arkansas National Guard prior to receiving benefits under this Act, and who possesses all necessary entrance requirements. In order for individuals to be qualified members they must have served at least one year with the Arkansas National Guard and have a current enlistment obligation or be a commissioned officer or warrant officer.

SECTION 3. Qualified members of the Arkansas National Guard may, if selected by their unit commander, attend any State supported institution of higher education in this State or any State supported technical or

vocational school in this State free of tuition fees for no more than 12 hours each semester for a total of 96 semester hours at any four-year institution, for 12 hours each semester for a total of 48 semester hours at any two-year institution, or for training necessary to earn a certificate of one occupational program at any vocational or technical school as long as the person is a satisfactorily performing member of the Arkansas National Guard. This Act does not limit the number of hours a qualified member may register for each semester, but this Act does limit the tuition waiver to the maximum prescribed above. Provided, however, the tuition waiver provided by this Act shall not apply to educational pursuits beyond a bachelor's degree. Provided further, no state supported university or college or state supported vocational-technical school shall be required to have more than ten (10) qualified members enrolled under the tuition waiver provided for herein during any semester. Unit commanders shall make selections based upon scholastic and military performance.

SECTION 4. In order to receive the tuition waiver provided by this Act the qualified member of the Arkansas National Guard must maintain a grade point average of at least 2.5 on a 4.0 scale.

SECTION 5. If any person receiving benefits under this Act ceases to be a member of the Arkansas National Guard or if his service becomes unsatisfactory while enrolled in a course of study under the tuition waiver provided by this Act, the person shall be permitted to complete that school term only upon payment of tuition in an amount allocable to the part of the term remaining. In addition, if the member does not complete his or her six year obligation, the member shall reimburse the State for all tuition benefits received.

SECTION 6. The State Board of Higher Education and the State Board of Vocational Education may promulgate regulations necessary for the implementation of this Act.

SECTION 7. At no time may more than five members of the same unit of the Arkansas National Guard receive benefits at the same time under this Act. Provided, however, this limitation does not apply when exceeded because of attrition or reduction in force. A "unit" shall be identified as a personnel

account symbol code in the Arkansas Air National Guard and as a payroll number in the Arkansas Army National Guard.

SECTION 8. Any member of the Arkansas National Guard who applies to his unit commander but is not selected for a tuition waiver may appeal such action to the Adjutant General of the State of Arkansas.

SECTION 9. All laws and parts of laws in conflict with this Act are hereby repealed.

