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114TH CONGRESS
1ST SESSION

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To amend title 38, United States Code, to improve the approval of certain programs of education for purposes of educational assistance provided by the Department of Veterans Affairs, and for other purposes.

IN THE SENATE OF THE UNITED STATES

AUGUST 5, 2015

Mr. BLUMENTHAL (for himself, Mr. TILLIS, Mr. BROWN, Mr. CARPER, Mr. CASSIDY, Mr. COONS, Mr. DURBIN, Mrs. FEINSTEIN, Mrs. GILLIBRAND, Mr. MERKLEY, Mr. MURPHY, Mr. REED, Mr. SCHUMER, and Mrs. SHAHEEN) introduced the following bill; which was read twice and referred to the Committee on Veterans' Affairs

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A BILL

To amend title 38, United States Code, to improve the approval of certain programs of education for purposes of educational assistance provided by the Department of Veterans Affairs, and for other purposes.

Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives of the United States of America in Congress assembled,

SECTION 1. SHORT TITLE.

This Act may be cited as the "Career-Ready Student Veterans Act of 2015".

SEC. 2. MODIFICATION OF REQUIREMENTS FOR APPROVAL OF COURSES USING EDUCATIONAL ASSISTANCE PROVIDED BY DEPARTMENT OF VETERANS AFFAIRS.

(a) APPROVAL OF NON-ACCREDITED COURSES.—Subsection (c) of section 3676 of title 38, United States Code, is amended—

(1) by redesignating paragraph (14) as paragraph (16); and

(2) by inserting after paragraph (13) the following new paragraphs:

''(14) In the case of a program designed to prepare an individual for licensure or certification in a State, the program meets any instructional curriculum licensure or certification requirements of such State.

''(15) In the case of a program designed to prepare an individual for employment pursuant to standards developed by a board or agency of a State in an occupation that requires approval or licensure, the program is approved or licensed by such board or agency of the State.''.

(b) EXCEPTIONS.—Such section is further amended by adding at the end the following new subsection:

''(f) The Secretary may waive the requirements of paragraph (14) or (15) of subsection (c) in the case of

a program of education offered by an educational institution if the Secretary determines the following:

"(1) The educational institution is accredited by an agency or association recognized by the Secretary of Education.

"(2) The program did not meet the requirements of such paragraph at any time during the two-year period preceding the date of the waiver.

"(3) The waiver furthers the purposes of the educational assistance programs administered by the Secretary or would further the education interests of individuals eligible for assistance under such programs.

"(4) The educational institution does not provide any commission, bonus, or other incentive payment based directly or indirectly on success in securing enrollments or financial aid to any persons or entities engaged in any student recruiting or admission activities or in making decisions regarding the award of student financial assistance, except for the recruitment of foreign students residing in foreign countries who are not eligible to receive Federal student assistance.".

(c) APPROVAL OF ACCREDITED COURSES.—Section 3675(b)(3) of such title is amended—

(1) by striking ''and (3)'' and inserting ''(3), (14), and (15)''; and

(2) by inserting before the period at the end the following: ''(or, with respect to such paragraphs (14) and (15), the requirements under such paragraphs are waived pursuant to subsection (f) of section 3676 of this title)''.

(d) DISAPPROVAL OF COURSES.—Section 3679 of such title is amended by adding at the end the following new subsection:

''(d) Notwithstanding any other provision of this chapter, the Secretary shall disapprove a course of education described in paragraph (14) or (15) of section 3676(c) of this title unless the educational institution providing the course of education publicly discloses any conditions or additional requirements, including training, experience, or exams, required to obtain the license, certification, or approval for which the course of education is designed to provide preparation.''.

(e) CONFORMING AMENDMENT.—Section 3672(b)(2)(A)(i) of such title is amended by striking ''An accredited'' and inserting ''Except as provided in paragraphs (14) and (15) of section 3676(c) of this title, an accredited''.

(f) APPLICABILITY.—If after enrollment in a course of education that is subject to disapproval by reason of an amendment made by this Act, an individual pursues one or more courses of education at the same educational institution while remaining continuously enrolled (other than during regularly scheduled breaks between courses, semesters, or terms) at that institution, any course so pursued by the individual at that institution while so continuously enrolled shall not be subject to disapproval by reason of such amendment.

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