

114TH CONGRESS
1ST SESSION

S. 2253

To amend title 38, United States Code, to provide veterans affected by closures of educational institutions certain relief and restoration of educational benefits, and for other purposes.

IN THE SENATE OF THE UNITED STATES

NOVEMBER 5, 2015

Mr. BLUMENTHAL (for himself, Mr. TILLIS, Ms. BALDWIN, Mr. BROWN, Mr. DURBIN, Mrs. GILLIBRAND, Ms. HIRONO, Mr. MURPHY, Mr. REED, Ms. WARREN, and Mr. WYDEN) introduced the following bill; which was read twice and referred to the Committee on Veterans' Affairs

A BILL

To amend title 38, United States Code, to provide veterans affected by closures of educational institutions certain relief and restoration of educational benefits, and for other purposes.

1 *Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representa-*
2 *tives of the United States of America in Congress assembled,*

3 **SECTION 1. SHORT TITLE.**

4 This Act may be cited as the “Department of Vet-
5 erans Affairs Veterans Education Relief and Restoration
6 Act of 2015”.

1 **SEC. 2. RESTORATION OF ENTITLEMENT TO EDUCATIONAL**
 2 **ASSISTANCE AND OTHER RELIEF FOR VET-**
 3 **ERANS AFFECTED BY CLOSURES OF EDU-**
 4 **CATIONAL INSTITUTIONS.**

5 (a) EDUCATIONAL ASSISTANCE.—

6 (1) IN GENERAL.—Section 3312 of title 38,
 7 United States Code, is amended by adding at the
 8 end the following new subsection:

9 “(d) DISCONTINUATION OF EDUCATION DUE TO
 10 CLOSURE OF EDUCATIONAL INSTITUTION.—

11 “(1) IN GENERAL.—Any payment of edu-
 12 cational assistance described in paragraph (2) shall
 13 not—

14 “(A) be charged against any entitlement to
 15 educational assistance of the individual con-
 16 cerned under this chapter; or

17 “(B) be counted against the aggregate pe-
 18 riod for which section 3695 of this title limits
 19 the individual’s receipt of educational assistance
 20 under this chapter.

21 “(2) DESCRIPTION OF PAYMENT OF EDU-
 22 CATIONAL ASSISTANCE.—Subject to paragraph (3),
 23 the payment of educational assistance described in
 24 this paragraph is the payment of such assistance to
 25 an individual for pursuit of a course or courses

1 under this chapter if the Secretary finds that the in-
2 dividual—

3 “(A) was forced to discontinue such course
4 pursuit as a result of a permanent closure of an
5 educational institution; and

6 “(B) did not receive credit, or lost training
7 time, toward completion of the program of edu-
8 cation being pursued at the time of such clo-
9 sure.

10 “(3) PERIOD FOR WHICH PAYMENT NOT
11 CHARGED.—The period for which, by reason of this
12 subsection, educational assistance is not charged
13 against entitlement or counted toward the applicable
14 aggregate period under section 3695 of this title
15 shall not exceed the aggregate of—

16 “(A) the portion of the period of enroll-
17 ment in the course or courses from which the
18 individual failed to receive credit or with respect
19 to which the individual lost training time, as de-
20 termined under paragraph (2)(B), and

21 “(B) the period by which monthly stipend
22 is extended under section 3680(a)(2)(B) of this
23 title.”.

24 (2) APPLICABILITY.—Subsection (d) of such
25 section, as added by paragraph (1), shall apply with

1 respect to courses and programs of education discon-
2 tinued as described in subparagraph (A) or (B) of
3 paragraph (2) of such subsection in fiscal year 2015
4 or any fiscal year thereafter.

5 (b) MONTHLY HOUSING STIPEND.—

6 (1) IN GENERAL.—Section 3680(a) of such title
7 is amended—

8 (A) by striking the matter after paragraph

9 (3)(B);

10 (B) in paragraph (3), by redesignating
11 subparagraphs (A) and (B) as clauses (i) and
12 (ii), respectively;

13 (C) by redesignating paragraphs (1)
14 through (3) as subparagraphs (A) through (C),
15 respectively;

16 (D) in the matter before subparagraph
17 (A), as redesignated, in the first sentence, by
18 striking “Payment of” and inserting “(1) Ex-
19 cept as provided in paragraph (2), payment of”;
20 and

21 (E) by adding at the end the following new
22 paragraph (2):

23 “(2) Notwithstanding paragraph (1), the Secretary
24 may, pursuant to such regulations as the Secretary shall
25 prescribe, continue to pay allowances to eligible veterans

1 and eligible persons enrolled in courses set forth in para-
2 graph (1)(A)—

3 “(A) during periods when schools are tempo-
4 rarily closed under an established policy based on an
5 Executive order of the President or due to an emer-
6 gency situation, except that the total number of
7 weeks for which allowances may continue to be so
8 payable in any 12-month period may not exceed four
9 weeks; or

10 “(B) solely for the purpose of awarding a
11 monthly housing stipend described in section 3313
12 of this title, during periods following a permanent
13 school closure, except that payment of such a sti-
14 pend may only be continued until the earlier of—

15 “(i) the date of the end of the term, quar-
16 ter, or semester during which the school closure
17 occurred; and

18 “(ii) the date that is 4 months after the
19 date of the school closure.”.

20 (2) CONFORMING AMENDMENT.—Paragraph
21 (1)(C)(ii) of such section, as redesignated, is amend-
22 ed by striking “described in subclause (A) of this
23 clause” and inserting “described in clause (ii)”.

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