S T A T E O F N E W Y O R K

4467

2011-2012 Regular Sessions

I N A S S E M B L Y

February 3, 2011

Introduced by M. of A. GABRYSZAK, COLTON, PHEFFER -- Multi-Sponsored by -- M. of A. JAFFEE, WEISENBERG -- read once and referred to the Committee on Higher Education

AN ACT to amend the education law, in relation to establishing a tuition assistance program for volunteer firefighters and volunteer emergency medical service personnel

THE PEOPLE OF THE STATE OF NEW YORK, REPRESENTED IN SENATE AND ASSEMBLY, DO ENACT AS FOLLOWS:

Section 1. The education law is amended by adding a new section 609 to read as follows:

S 609. TUITION ASSISTANCE PROGRAM FOR VOLUNTEER FIREFIGHTERS AND VOLUNTEER EMERGENCY MEDICAL SERVICE PERSONNEL. 1. DEFINITIONS. AS USED IN THIS SECTION THE FOLLOWING TERMS SHALL HAVE THE FOLLOWING MEANINGS:

(A) "VOLUNTEER FIREFIGHTER" SHALL MEAN AN ACTIVE VOLUNTEER MEMBER OF A FIRE COMPANY OF A COUNTY, A FIRE COMPANY OF A CITY, TOWN OR VILLAGE LOCATED WITHIN SUCH COUNTY, OR A FIRE DISTRICT FIRE DEPARTMENT LOCATED WITHIN SUCH COUNTY, WHETHER OR NOT ANY SUCH COMPANY IS INCORPORATED UNDER ANY GENERAL OR SPECIAL LAW.

(B) "VOLUNTEER EMERGENCY MEDICAL SERVICE PERSONNEL" SHALL MEAN AN ACTIVE VOLUNTEER MEMBER OF ANY EMERGENCY MEDICAL SERVICE AS ESTABLISHED WITHIN A COUNTY, TOWN, VILLAGE OR CITY OR LOCAL TAX DISTRICT, WHETHER OR NOT ANY SUCH SERVICE IS INCORPORATED UNDER ANY GENERAL OR SPECIAL LAW.

(C) "PART-TIME STUDY" SHALL MEAN ENROLLMENT IN AN APPROVED POST-SECONDARY DEGREE PROGRAM FOR AT LEAST SIX BUT LESS THAN TWELVE SEMESTER HOURS, OR THE EQUIVALENT PER SEMESTER, OR AT LEAST FOUR BUT LESS THAN EIGHT SEMESTER HOURS PER QUARTER IN AN INSTITUTION.

(D) "INSTITUTION" SHALL MEAN ANY INSTITUTION OF HIGHER EDUCATION RECOGNIZED AND APPROVED BY THE REGENTS OR THE UNIVERSITY OF THE STATE OF NEW YORK WHICH PROVIDES A COURSE OF STUDY LEADING TO THE GRANTING OF A POST-SECONDARY DEGREE OR DIPLOMA.

EXPLANATION--Matter in ITALICS (underscored) is new; matter in brackets [ ] is old law to be omitted.

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(E) "TUITION" SHALL MEAN THE TOTAL SEMESTER, QUARTER OR CLASSROOM HOUR COST OF INSTRUCTION TO THE STUDENT AS PERIODICALLY PUBLISHED IN THE CATALOGUE OF THE INSTITUTION, SPECIFICALLY EXCLUDING MANDATORY FEES, BOOK CHARGES AND ROOM AND BOARD.

(F) "DEGREE PRODUCING CURRICULUM" SHALL MEAN A SERIES OF COURSES PROGRAMMED TO CULMINATE IN A SPECIFIC POST-SECONDARY DEGREE OR DIPLOMA WHEN SUCCESSFULLY COMPLETED.

2. ANY COUNTY WITHIN THE STATE IS AUTHORIZED, BY ENACTMENT OF A LOCAL LAW, TO ESTABLISH AND IMPLEMENT A TUITION ASSISTANCE PROGRAM FOR VOLUNTEER FIREFIGHTERS AND VOLUNTEER EMERGENCY MEDICAL SERVICE PERSONNEL TO PROVIDE TUITION ASSISTANCE TO VOLUNTEER FIREFIGHTERS AND VOLUNTEER EMERGENCY MEDICAL SERVICE PERSONNEL ENROLLED ON AT LEAST A PART-TIME BASIS IN A DEGREE PRODUCING CURRICULUM IN ANY INSTITUTION. ANY PROGRAM ESTABLISHED PURSUANT TO THIS SECTION SHALL PROVIDE TUITION ASSISTANCE GRANTS TO SUCH VOLUNTEER FIREFIGHTER OR VOLUNTEER EMERGENCY MEDICAL SERVICE PERSONNEL IN AN AMOUNT UP TO ONE HUNDRED PERCENT OF THE TUITION REQUIRED TO BE PAID TO SUCH INSTITUTION BY SUCH VOLUNTEER FIREFIGHTER OR VOLUNTEER EMERGENCY MEDICAL SERVICE PERSONNEL.

3. NOTWITHSTANDING ANY OTHER PROVISION OF LAW, RULE OR REGULATION ANY VOLUNTEER FIREFIGHTER OR VOLUNTEER EMERGENCY MEDICAL SERVICE PERSONNEL SHALL BE ELIGIBLE FOR THE TUITION ASSISTANCE PROVIDED BY THIS SECTION PROVIDED SUCH VOLUNTEER FIREFIGHTER OR VOLUNTEER EMERGENCY MEDICAL SERVICE PERSONNEL SERVES IN SUCH POSITION WHILE ENROLLED IN A DEGREE PRODUCING CURRICULUM AT AN INSTITUTION AND FOR ONE ADDITIONAL YEAR UPON COMPLETION OF ENROLLMENT AT SUCH INSTITUTION.

4. ANY COUNTY WHICH ESTABLISHES A TUITION ASSISTANCE PROGRAM FOR VOLUNTEER FIREFIGHTERS AND VOLUNTEER EMERGENCY MEDICAL SERVICE PERSONNEL PURSUANT TO THE PROVISIONS OF THIS SECTION SHALL BE ENTITLED TO REIMBURSEMENT FROM THE STATE FOR ONE HUNDRED PERCENT OF THE ACTUAL COST OF TUITION ASSISTANCE PAID BY SUCH COUNTY TO VOLUNTEER FIREFIGHTERS OR VOLUNTEER EMERGENCY MEDICAL SERVICE PERSONNEL.

S 2. This act shall take effect January 1, 2012.