

5518

2013-2014 Regular Sessions

I N A S S E M B L Y

February 28, 2013

Introduced by M. of A. GABRYSZAK, COLTON -- 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:

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

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

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

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

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

19 (D) "INSTITUTION" SHALL MEAN ANY INSTITUTION OF HIGHER EDUCATION
20 RECOGNIZED AND APPROVED BY THE REGENTS OR THE UNIVERSITY OF THE STATE OF
21 NEW YORK WHICH PROVIDES A COURSE OF STUDY LEADING TO THE GRANTING OF A
22 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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1 (E) "TUITION" SHALL MEAN THE TOTAL SEMESTER, QUARTER OR CLASSROOM HOUR
2 COST OF INSTRUCTION TO THE STUDENT AS PERIODICALLY PUBLISHED IN THE
3 CATALOGUE OF THE INSTITUTION, SPECIFICALLY EXCLUDING MANDATORY FEES,
4 BOOK CHARGES AND ROOM AND BOARD.

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

8 2. ANY COUNTY WITHIN THE STATE IS AUTHORIZED, BY ENACTMENT OF A LOCAL
9 LAW, TO ESTABLISH AND IMPLEMENT A TUITION ASSISTANCE PROGRAM FOR VOLUN-
10 TEER FIREFIGHTERS AND VOLUNTEER EMERGENCY MEDICAL SERVICE PERSONNEL TO
11 PROVIDE TUITION ASSISTANCE TO VOLUNTEER FIREFIGHTERS AND VOLUNTEER EMER-
12 GENCY MEDICAL SERVICE PERSONNEL ENROLLED ON AT LEAST A PART-TIME BASIS
13 IN A DEGREE PRODUCING CURRICULUM IN ANY INSTITUTION. ANY PROGRAM ESTAB-
14 LISHED PURSUANT TO THIS SECTION SHALL PROVIDE TUITION ASSISTANCE GRANTS
15 TO SUCH VOLUNTEER FIREFIGHTER OR VOLUNTEER EMERGENCY MEDICAL SERVICE
16 PERSONNEL IN AN AMOUNT UP TO ONE HUNDRED PERCENT OF THE TUITION REQUIRED
17 TO BE PAID TO SUCH INSTITUTION BY SUCH VOLUNTEER FIREFIGHTER OR VOLUN-
18 TEER EMERGENCY MEDICAL SERVICE PERSONNEL.

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

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

32 S 2. This act shall take effect January 1, 2014.