STATE OF NEW YORK

8596--A

IN SENATE

February 20, 2024

Introduced by Sen. SCARCELLA-SPANTON -- read twice and ordered printed, and when printed to be committed to the Committee on Veterans, Homeland Security and Military Affairs -- committee discharged, bill amended, ordered reprinted as amended and recommitted to said committee

AN ACT to amend the education law, in relation to expanding eligibility under the veterans tuition awards program

The People of the State of New York, represented in Senate and Assembly, do enact as follows:

Section 1. Paragraph d of subdivision 1 of section 669-a of the education law, as amended by section 46 of part PP of chapter 56 of the laws of 2022, is amended to read as follows:

d. "Other eligible [~~combat~~] veteran" means: an individual who (i) is a resident of this state, (ii) served in the armed forces of the United States [~~in hostilities that occurred after February twenty-eighth, nineteen hundred sixty-one, as evidenced by their receipt of an Armed Forces Expeditionary Medal, Navy Expeditionary Medal, or Marine Corps Expeditionary Medal~~], and (iii) was either discharged under honorable conditions, including but not limited to honorable discharge, discharge under honorable conditions, or general discharge, or has a qualifying condition, as defined in section one of the veterans' services law, and has received a discharge other than bad conduct or dishonorable from such service, or is a discharged LGBT veteran, as defined in section one of the veterans' services law, and has received a discharge other than bad conduct or dishonorable from such service.

§ 2. Paragraph a of subdivision 2 of section 669-a of the education law, as amended by section 3 of part N of chapter 57 of the laws of 2008, is amended to read as follows:

a. Tuition awards are available for all [~~Vietnam, Persian Gulf, Afghanistan and~~] other eligible [~~combat~~] veterans, as defined in subdivision one of this section, who are enrolled, pursuant to paragraph a of subdivision four of section six hundred sixty-one of this part, in approved undergraduate or graduate programs at degree granting institutions or enrolled in approved vocational training programs and who

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

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apply for a tuition assistance program award**, for up to the equivalent of eight full-time semesters,** pursuant to section six hundred sixty-seven of this subpart.

§ 3. Subdivision 4 of section 669-a of the education law, as amended by section 4 of part N of chapter 57 of the laws of 2008, is amended to read as follows:

4. Every recipient shall receive an award equal to the amount of undergraduate **or graduate** tuition for residents of New York state charged by the state university of New York or actual tuition charged, whichever is less, for each semester, or the equivalent, of full time study, or a pro-rated amount for part-time study; provided, however, that such award shall not be reduced by any benefits available under the federal Montgomery GI Bill act of 1984 or the federal Pell grant program pursuant to section one thousand seventy-a of title twenty of the United States code.

§ 4. This act shall take effect immediately.