

MAINE STATE LEGISLATURE

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ONE HUNDRED AND SIXTH LEGISLATURE

Legislative Document

No. 1650

S. P. 519

In Senate, March 29, 1973

Referred to Committee on Education. Sent down for concurrence and ordered printed.

HARRY N. STARBRANCH, Secretary

Presented by Senator Speers of Kennebec.

STATE OF MAINE

IN THE YEAR OF OUR LORD NINETEEN HUNDRED
SEVENTY-THREE

AN ACT Relating to Viet Nam Era Veterans Student Assistance Program.

Be it enacted by the People of the State of Maine, as follows:

Sec. 1. R. S., T. 37-A, c. 2, sub-c. II, additional. Chapter 2 of Title 37-A, as enacted by section 1 of chapter 580 of the public laws of 1971, is amended by adding a new subchapter II to read as follows:

SUBCHAPTER II

**VIET NAM ERA VETERANS STUDENT
ASSISTANCE PROGRAM**

§ 41. Purposes

It is the purpose of the Viet Nam Era Veterans Student Assistance Program to establish a program of student aid for the benefit of qualified resident veterans of this State, which shall be financed by the State and administered by the State Bureau of Veterans Services, to eligible Viet Nam Era Veterans in attendance at institutions of higher education in Maine.

§ 42. Definitions

As used in this chapter, unless the context otherwise indicates, the following words shall have the following meanings.

1. Criteria. "Criteria" means the process, procedures, norms and guidelines established by the State Bureau of Veterans Services.

2. Eligible students. "Eligible students" means undergraduate students in attendance at institutions of higher education in Maine who demonstrate substantial financial need for a given academic year or years.

3. Fiscal year. "Fiscal year" means year beginning on July 1st and ending on the following June 30th.

4. In attendance. "In attendance" means that a student is attending an institution of higher education in Maine on a full-time basis, as determined by the Bureau of Veterans Services.

5. Institution of higher education. "Institution of higher education" means any post-secondary institution in Maine, public or private, properly approved by the State Board of Education and the Veterans Administration.

6. Resident. "Resident" shall mean anyone who entered the Armed Forces of the United States from Maine or who has established a legal residence in Maine of at least 6 months duration immediately prior to making application for an award under this subchapter and who has received certification as an eligible Maine resident veteran from the Maine Bureau of Veterans Services.

7. Substantial financial need. "Substantial financial need" means the inability of a student or his family, or both, to meet the expenses incurred by the student in attending an institution of higher education in full or in substantial part. The degree of substantial financial need present with respect to a student is measured by the relative ability of the student or his family, or both, to make a contribution toward such expenses, when compared with that of other students or their families, or both.

8. Viet Nam Era veteran. "Viet Nam Era veteran" shall be construed to mean any person who served in the Armed Forces of the United States on active duty during the Viet Nam Era and who has been discharged or released therefrom under honorable conditions. A veteran of the Viet Nam Era shall have served on active duty for a period of more than 180 days, any part of which occurred after August 4, 1964, except if he was discharged for a service-connected disability after such date.

§ 43. Viet Nam Era Veterans Student Assistance Program

There is created upon the books of the State a special Viet Nam Era Veterans Student Assistance Program Account. A fund is appropriated to the Bureau of Veterans Services to establish a Viet Nam Era Veterans Student Assistance Program to be distributed to Maine resident Viet Nam Era Veterans high school graduates, or equivalent, in Maine public and private institutions of higher education. Students, to be eligible, must show financial need as determined by guidelines and criteria established by the Bureau of Veterans Services, and must be enrolled in an eligible institution so designated by the Bureau of Veterans Services. The amount of award shall be based on need, but shall not fall below the minimum of \$100 per academic year, nor exceed the maximum of \$500 per academic year, providing that if the Viet Nam Era veteran student is enrolled in a private institution, that said private institution would allow for a credit, to the Viet Nam Era student, in tuition costs in an amount equal to the state's monetary award.

Sec. 2. Appropriation. There is appropriated from the Unappropriated Surplus of the General Fund the sum of \$250,000 for the fiscal year ending

June 30, 1974, and \$250,000 for the fiscal year ending June 30, 1975. This will provide for an average subsidy of approximately \$250 for approximately 1,000 Viet Nam Era veteran students and the necessary costs of administration by the Bureau of Veterans Services.

STATEMENT OF FACT

The purpose of this bill is reflected in the first section of the bill and in addition to this the State is already providing a subsidy to students attending public institutions in the form of lower tuition rates than are charged in private institutions. The public institutions have limited admissions capabilities which could be alleviated if more veterans could afford to attend private institutions. This bill would allow the veteran student a wider choice of institutions which he could afford to attend.