

MAINE STATE LEGISLATURE

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123rd MAINE LEGISLATURE

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Legislative Document

No. 1013

S.P. 330

March 6, 2007

**An Act To Offer Tuition Waivers for State Higher Education
Facilities to Eligible Veterans**

Reference to the Committee on Education and Cultural Affairs suggested and ordered printed.

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Joy J. O'Brien".

JOY J. O'BRIEN
Secretary of the Senate

Presented by Senator MITCHELL of Kennebec.
Cosponsored by Senator: MARRACHÉ of Kennebec, Representatives: EBERLE of South
Portland, NORTON of Bangor, SUTHERLAND of Chapman.

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

2 **Sec. 1. 20-A MRSA c. 429-B** is enacted to read:

3 **CHAPTER 429-B**

4 **ADDITIONAL TUITION WAIVERS AT STATE POSTSECONDARY**
5 **EDUCATIONAL INSTITUTIONS**

6 **§12581. Definitions**

7 As used in this chapter, unless the context otherwise indicates, the following terms
8 have the following meanings.

9 **1. Authority.** "Authority" means the Finance Authority of Maine.

10 **2. State postsecondary educational institution.** "State postsecondary educational
11 institution" means the University of Maine System, the Maine Maritime Academy and the
12 Maine Community College System.

13 **§12582. Eligibility criteria by category**

14 The following categories of persons are eligible for tuition waivers under this section,
15 as long as other criteria set out in section 12583 are met:

16 **1. Veterans.** Persons who are veterans. The authority shall by routine technical rule
17 adopted in accordance with Title 5, chapter 375, subchapter 2-A establish a definition for
18 "veterans" under this chapter.

19 **§12583. Tuition waiver limitations**

20 **1. Eligibility of person.** A person is eligible for a tuition waiver under this chapter
21 if the person:

22 A. Is a Maine resident;

23 B. Is a high school graduate or has attained a high school equivalency diploma as
24 described under section 257;

25 C. Is accepted for admission to a state postsecondary educational institution; and

26 D. Meets other eligibility criteria by category established in section 12582.

27 **2. Limitation.** The tuition waiver provided by this chapter is limited to a person
28 who:

29 A. Is participating in an undergraduate degree program or certificate program of at
30 least one year;

31 B. Has not been enrolled full time for more than 5 years or the equivalent; and

1 C. Has completed an application for federal student financial aid programs for which
2 the person may be eligible.

3 **3. Continuation.** The tuition waiver provided by this chapter is awarded on a yearly
4 basis and continues to be available, if the person is otherwise eligible under this section,
5 as long as the person remains in good academic standing at a state postsecondary
6 educational institution.

7 **4. Revenue reduction.** A state postsecondary educational institution shall absorb
8 the reduction in tuition revenues that results from providing a tuition waiver to an eligible
9 person under this chapter. The institution may not request additional General Fund
10 appropriations from the Legislature to offset the reduction in tuition revenues.

11 **§12584. Administration**

12 **1. Application.** A person desiring a tuition waiver under this chapter may apply to
13 the authority for determination of eligibility. Application must be on forms and in a
14 manner prescribed by rule of the authority. Rules adopted pursuant to this chapter are
15 routine technical rules as defined in Title 5, chapter 375, subchapter 2-A.

16 **2. Decision.** The authority shall determine whether an applicant is eligible and
17 notify the applicant. The authority shall also notify the state postsecondary educational
18 institution at which the person is accepted of the eligibility of that person for a tuition
19 waiver. Unless notified by the authority of a change in the student's eligibility, the
20 institution may not bill an eligible student for tuition during that school year.

21 **3. Limitation.** Tuition waivers to eligible persons are limited to a certain number of
22 new students per year in each year at state postsecondary educational institutions in
23 accordance with routine technical rules adopted by the authority in accordance with Title
24 5, chapter 375, subchapter 2-A.

25 **SUMMARY**

26 This bill establishes a tuition waiver for veterans at state postsecondary educational
27 institutions. Under the bill, the Finance Authority of Maine will administer the tuition
28 waiver program, as it currently does under the Maine Revised Statutes, Title 20-A,
29 chapters 429 and 429-A. The authority is given rulemaking powers to define “veteran”
30 and to establish how many tuition waivers are available each year at each state
31 postsecondary educational institution.