

110TH CONGRESS
2D SESSION

S. 2677

To amend the Higher Education Act of 1965 to authorize the Secretary of Education to provide grants to institutions of higher education to establish programs for the provision of services and support to veterans who are students at such institutions, and for other purposes.

IN THE SENATE OF THE UNITED STATES

FEBRUARY 28, 2008

Mr. BROWN (for himself, Mrs. CLINTON, and Mr. OBAMA) introduced the following bill; which was read twice and referred to the Committee on Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions

A BILL

To amend the Higher Education Act of 1965 to authorize the Secretary of Education to provide grants to institutions of higher education to establish programs for the provision of services and support to veterans who are students at such institutions, and for other purposes.

1 *Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representa-*
2 *tives of the United States of America in Congress assembled,*

3 **SECTION 1. SHORT TITLE.**

4 This Act may be cited as the “Supporting Education
5 for Returning Veterans Act of 2008”.

1 **SEC. 2. GRANT PROGRAM FOR SUPPORT OF VETERANS AT**
 2 **INSTITUTIONS OF HIGHER EDUCATION.**

3 Title VII of the Higher Education Act of 1965 (20
 4 U.S.C. 1133 et seq.) is amended by adding at the end
 5 the following:

6 **“PART F—PROGRAM FOR SUPPORT OF VET-**
 7 **ERANS AT INSTITUTIONS OF HIGHER EDU-**
 8 **CATION**

9 **“SEC. 781. GRANT PROGRAM FOR SUPPORT OF VETERANS**
 10 **AT INSTITUTIONS OF HIGHER EDUCATION.**

11 “(a) GRANTS AUTHORIZED.—

12 “(1) IN GENERAL.—Subject to the availability
 13 of appropriations, the Secretary is authorized to
 14 award grants to institutions of higher education to
 15 enable the institutions of higher education to estab-
 16 lish programs that support veterans who are stu-
 17 dents at such institutions by providing and coordi-
 18 nating services that address the academic, financial,
 19 physical, and social needs of such veterans.

20 “(2) GRANT PERIOD.—A grant awarded under
 21 this section shall be awarded for a period of 3 years.

22 “(b) SELECTION OF GRANT RECIPIENTS.—

23 “(1) APPLICATION.—An institution of higher
 24 education seeking a grant under this section shall
 25 submit to the Secretary an application in such form,

1 at such time, and containing such information as the
2 Secretary may require.

3 “(2) APPROVAL.—The Secretary shall, in con-
4 sultation with the Secretary of Veterans Affairs, ap-
5 prove or disapprove each application submitted by
6 an institution of higher education under paragraph
7 (1). In determining whether to approve or dis-
8 approve an application, the Secretary shall consider
9 the following:

10 “(A) The number of veterans enrolled as
11 students at the institution of higher education.

12 “(B) The needs of such veterans at such
13 institution.

14 “(C) The ability of such institution to sus-
15 tain a Center of Excellence for Veteran Student
16 Success described in subsection (c)(2)(A) after
17 the completion of the grant period described in
18 subsection (a)(2).

19 “(D) The equitable distribution of grants
20 under this section among various types and
21 sizes of institutions of higher education.

22 “(E) The equitable geographic distribution
23 of grants under this section.

1 “(F) The equitable distribution of grants
 2 under this section among rural and urban
 3 areas.

4 “(c) USE OF GRANT FUNDS.—

5 “(1) PROGRAM REQUIRED.—Each institution of
 6 higher education receiving a grant under this section
 7 shall use the grant to establish a program that sup-
 8 ports each veteran who is a student at such institu-
 9 tion by providing and coordinating services that ad-
 10 dress the academic, financial, physical, and social
 11 needs of such veteran.

12 “(2) REQUIRED PROGRAM ACTIVITIES.—Each
 13 program established under paragraph (1) shall in-
 14 clude the following:

15 “(A) Establishing a Center of Excellence
 16 for Veteran Student Success on the campus of
 17 the institution of higher education that provides
 18 a single point of contact to coordinate com-
 19 prehensive support services for veterans who
 20 are students, including the following:

21 “(i) Admissions.

22 “(ii) Registration.

23 “(iii) Financial aid.

24 “(iv) Veterans benefits.

25 “(v) Academic advising.

1 “(vi) Student health.

2 “(vii) Personal or mental health coun-
3 seling.

4 “(viii) Career advising.

5 “(ix) Disabilities services.

6 “(B) Establishing a support team for vet-
7 erans who are students, including representa-
8 tives from the student veteran association and
9 veteran service office of such institution of
10 higher education, if any.

11 “(C) Providing a full-time or part-time co-
12 ordinator whose primary responsibility is to co-
13 ordinate the program.

14 “(D) With respect to such veterans, moni-
15 toring the rates of enrollment, persistence, and
16 completion of programs of education at such in-
17 stitution.

18 “(3) OPTIONAL PROGRAM ACTIVITIES.—With
19 respect to veterans who are students at an institu-
20 tion of higher education receiving a grant under this
21 section, a program established under paragraph (1)
22 by such institution may include the following:

23 “(A) Outreach to, and recruitment of, vet-
24 erans.

1 “(B) Supportive instructional services for
2 veterans, which may include—

3 “(i) personal, academic, and career
4 counseling, as an ongoing part of the pro-
5 gram;

6 “(ii) tutoring and academic skill-build-
7 ing instruction assistance, as needed; and

8 “(iii) assistance with special admis-
9 sions and transfer of credit from previous
10 postsecondary education or experience.

11 “(C) Assistance in obtaining student finan-
12 cial aid.

13 “(D) Housing support.

14 “(E) Providing classes that are limited to
15 veterans to help them fulfill general education
16 requirements.

17 “(F) Providing activities designed to ease
18 the transition of veterans to life on the campus
19 of such institution.

20 “(G) Support for veteran student organiza-
21 tions and veteran student support groups on
22 campus.

23 “(H) Coordination of academic advising
24 and admissions counseling with military bases

1 and National Guard and Reserve units in the
2 area.

3 “(I) Such other support services as the in-
4 stitution considers necessary to ensure the suc-
5 cess of veterans in achieving the veterans’ edu-
6 cational and career goals.

7 “(d) EVALUATION AND ACCOUNTABILITY PLAN.—
8 The Secretary shall develop an evaluation and account-
9 ability plan for programs established under subsection
10 (c)(1) to measure the impact of such programs, including
11 an objective measure of whether the rates of enrollment,
12 persistence, and completion of programs of education at
13 institutions of higher education by veterans increase as a
14 result of such programs.”.

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