



COMMONWEALTH OF VIRGINIA JOINT LEADERSHIP COUNCIL OF VETERANS SERVICE ORGANIZATIONS

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Roanoke Valley Veterans
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Vietnam Veterans of America
Virginia Army/Air National
Guard Enlisted
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Virginia National Guard
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Women Marines Association*

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In-state Tuition Eligibility for members of the Reserve Components

1. **OBJECTIVE:** Provide in-state tuition eligibility at public colleges and universities for all members of the Guard and Reserve components of the Armed Forces.
2. **BACKGROUND:**
 - a. Members of the Virginia National Guard and Armed Forces Reserve stationed and domiciled in Virginia, but with residency in another state, are not currently eligible for in-state tuition if they have not resided in Virginia for at least one-year.
 - b. Enlisting in the Virginia National Guard or Reserves is generally a six-year commitment to train, drill, and have their duty location in Virginia.
 - c. There is a growing reliance, both at the federal and state level, on the National Guard. During 2016 alone, the Virginia National Guard mobilized onto federal active duty more than 2,100 Soldiers and Airmen; one of our heaviest years supporting the global war on terrorism in 15 years.
 - d. Since September 11, 2001 over 15,000 Virginia Guardsmen have been mobilized for federal duty (providing them with the requisite 180 days of federal active duty) and over 8,000 Virginia Guardsmen have been called to state active duty supporting the Commonwealth during periods of emergency (which does not count toward their 180 days of federal active duty).
3. **DISCUSSION:**
 - a. The Commonwealth provides in-state tuition to active duty soldiers, activated (full-time) Reservists and Guardsmen on long term orders, veterans and dependents of active duty soldiers on orders are granted in-state tuition rates.
 - b. The requested legislation expands in-state tuition to all members of the Virginia National Guard and Reserve components who reside in Virginia, but who are currently required to meet the same residency guidelines as non-military persons.
 - c. The six-year commitment, along with their physical domiciliary presence within the Commonwealth, justifies immediate eligibility. Virginia National Guard potentially serve our country overseas for 12 months or longer and are called up to serve the Commonwealth in natural and other disasters.
 - d. Virginia is at a disadvantage in attracting talent, compared to our neighbor states:
 - a. North Carolina, West Virginia and Tennessee offer in-state tuition rates to ALL National Guard members.
 - b. 18 States pay 100% of their Guardsmen public schools tuition rates.
 - e. This legislation will further bolster Governor McAuliffe's primary initiatives to "make Virginia the most military and veteran friendly state in the nation."
4. **RECOMMENDATIONS:** That the Governor and the General Assembly change the eligibility for in-state tuition to include all members of the Virginia National Guard and the Reserve components, thus recognizing their service to the Commonwealth and treating them equally to the active components and veterans.