**A** **BILL**

TO AMEND SECTION 59‑112‑50(C) OF THE 1976 CODE, RELATING TO THE DEFINITION OF “COVERED INDIVIDUAL” FOR THE PURPOSES OF TUITION RATES FOR MILITARY PERSONNEL AND THEIR DEPENDENTS, TO ELIMINATE THE REQUIREMENT THAT A VETERAN OR DEPENDENT ENROLL IN A PUBLIC INSTITUTION OF HIGHER EDUCATION WITHIN THREE YEAR’S OF THE VETERAN’S DISCHARGE IN ORDER TO RECEIVE EDUCATIONAL ASSISTANCE.

Be it enacted by the General Assembly of the State of South Carolina:

SECTION 1. Section 59‑112‑50(C) of the 1976 Code is amended to read:

“(C)(1) Notwithstanding any other provision of law, a covered individual enrolled in a public institution of higher education and receiving educational assistance under Chapter 30, Chapter 31, and Chapter 33, Title 38 of the United States Code are entitled to pay in‑state tuition and fees without regard to the length of time the covered individual has resided in this State.

(2) For purposes of this subsection, a covered individual is defined as:

(a) a veteran who served ninety days or longer on active duty in the uniformed service of the United States, their respective reserve forces, or the National Guard ~~and who enrolls within three years of discharge~~;

(b) a person who is entitled to and receiving assistance under Section 3319, Title 38 of the United States Code by virtue of the person's relationship to the veteran described in subitem (a) ~~who enrolls within three years of the veteran's discharge~~;

(c) a person using transferred benefits under Section 3319, Title 38 of the United States Code while the transferor is on active duty in the uniformed service of the United States, their respective reserve forces, or the National Guard;

(d) a person who is entitled to and receiving assistance under Section 3311(b)(9), Title 38 of the United States Code; or

(e) a person who is entitled to and is receiving assistance under Section 3102(a), Title 38 of the United States Code.

(3) A covered individual must live in this State while enrolled at the in‑state institution.

~~(4)~~ ~~At the conclusion of the applicable three‑year period in subsection (C)(2)(a) or (b), a covered individual shall remain eligible for in‑state rates as long as he remains continuously enrolled in an in‑state institution or transfers to another in‑state institution during the term or semester, excluding summer terms, immediately following his enrollment at the previous in‑state institution. In the event of a transfer, the in‑state institution receiving the covered individual shall verify the covered individual's eligibility for in‑state rates with the covered individual's prior in‑state institution. It is the responsibility of the transferring covered individual to ensure all documents required to verify both the previous and present residency decisions are provided to the in‑state institution.~~”

SECTION 2. This act takes effect upon approval by the Governor.

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