



WISCONSIN LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL AMENDMENT MEMO

2005 Assembly Bill 317

**Assembly
Amendment 1**

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Assembly Bill 317 is the first bill [along with Assembly Bills 318 and 319] in what is being referred to as the “Veterans Relief Package.” The bill requires the University of Wisconsin (UW) System and each technical college district board to grant a full remission of tuition and fees at any UW institution or technical college to the spouse, unremarried surviving spouse, or child of an eligible veteran.

The bill defines “eligible veteran” as either of the following:

1. A person who has served on active duty under honorable conditions in the U.S. Armed Forces or forces incorporated in the U.S. Armed Forces, or in the National Guard or Reserves, who was a resident of Wisconsin at the time of entry or reentry into that service and who, while a resident of Wisconsin, either died on active duty or died in the line of duty while on active or inactive duty for training purposes; or
2. A person who was a resident of this state at the time of entry or reentry into the service described in item 1. and who, while a resident of Wisconsin, incurred at least a 30% service-connected disability.

For UW institutions, the bill requires full remission of both instate tuition (referred to in the statutes as “academic fees”) and segregated fees.

For UW institutions and technical colleges, full remission is granted for 128 credits or eight semesters, whichever is longer. The spouse of an eligible veteran may receive the remission during the first 10 years after the veteran received the service-connected disability. The unremarried surviving spouse of an eligible veteran may receive the remission during the first 10 years after the veteran died. The child of an eligible veteran must be at least 18, but not yet 26 years of age and a full-time student at either a UW institution or a technical college.

Assembly Amendment 1 does the following:

1. Clarifies that the Department of Veterans Affairs is responsible for verifying to the educational institution that the person is an eligible veteran.
2. Changes the way the 30% service-connected disability is referred to, because testimony at the public hearing indicated that the bill language could be construed to require a single 30% disability, whereas a person may sustain several lesser disabilities that result in a 30% disability *rating* under federal law. Hence, the amendment refers to the disability *rating* and cites specific federal provisions under which those ratings are made.
3. Eliminates references in the bill to *reentry* into service. The Department of Veterans Affairs indicated that it treats, and refers to, any entry into service following the initial entry as an “entry” rather than a “reentry.”

Legislative History

The Assembly Committee on Veterans Affairs held an executive session on May 17, 2005. The committee voted to adopt Assembly Amendment 1 and to recommend passage of the bill, as amended, both on a vote on Ayes, 6; Noes, 0.

PS:rv:ksm