

MIKE KUGLITSCH

STATE REPRESENTATIVE • 84TH ASSEMBLY DISTRICT

DATE: October 10, 2017
RE: **Testimony on 2017 Assembly Bill 512**
TO: The Assembly Committee on Colleges and Universities
FROM: Representative Mike Kuglitsch

Thank you, Mr. Chairman and Committee Members for holding a public hearing on Assembly Bill 512. This bill ensures that National Guard Members will be reimbursed the full cost of tuition under the Wisconsin National Guard Tuition Grant Program.

Currently, the University of Wisconsin schools are able to charge a fee, on top of base tuition, called differential tuition. The Board of Regents at each university has the ability to implement this additional fee. At some of our UW schools, differential tuition may be required to help support the costs of some programs (i.e., business or engineering) and additional services that the curriculum may require.

In the past, there has been confusion in statute about whether differential tuition is required to be covered by the Wisconsin National Guard Tuition Grant. In some instances differential tuition has been covered by the Department of Military Affairs while in others it has not been covered.

While some degree programs have a higher rate of tuition, charged in the differential tuition fee, this bill clarifies that a promise made will be honored and no matter what degree program a guard member may choose, the full cost of tuition will be covered. It should be noted that this bill is simply a clarification and differential tuition is currently being approved to be paid by the Department of Military Affairs. According to DOA, there will be no fiscal impact to the state due to this bill.

The bill also allows government to adapt as technology advances and make sure our veterans get reimbursed on time in order to avoid taking out additional costly loans. It does this by replacing the requirement for a hard copy paper form of approval sent in the mail with a process that would allow the Wisconsin Department of Military Affairs to verify grant requirements electronically. Under the bill, reimbursement will be required to be processed within 30 days in order to avoid any need for Guard Members to take out additional loans.

As legislators, I believe it is imperative that we clarify this statute to make sure it does not matter what degree a member of the National Guard chooses, we want to keep our promise to pay 100% of tuition. Thank you for allowing me to testify and I ask that you support AB 512.

STATE SENATOR
Leah Vukmir

Assembly Committee on Colleges and Universities

Tuesday, Oct. 10, 2017

Assembly Bill 512

Chairman Murphy and committee members, thank you for taking the time for a public hearing on Assembly Bill 512 today.

As a blue star mom, I pray someday my son who serves as a first lieutenant in the U.S. Army will become a veteran. I am proud of my son and am thankful for his service – just as I am for the service of his colleagues in every branch of our nation’s military. Those who serve our country and make the personal sacrifice to keep us safe deserve the certainty that government will honor its promises. This pledge applies to our soldiers while they serve, and also after they discharge and enter civilian life.

Currently, the state of Wisconsin pays for undergraduate tuition for the brave men and women who serve in the Wisconsin National Guard. Under no circumstances should administrative glitches prevent that from happening. Unfortunately, under current law, it is unclear whether differential tuition, which universities can charge for some specific programs like business or engineering, is covered under the grant. On occasion, this has resulted in a failure to reimburse military service members for the additional cost.

This bill also ensures that service members will be reimbursed in a timely manner. By removing red tape in the reimbursement process, universities will be able to work faster to help our veterans receive their grant money in time for the next semester’s tuition. The Department of Military Affairs will also be required to handle the reimbursement within 30 days of receiving verification that the veteran earned the minimum GPA for the grant.

Not only will this bill help veterans avoid late fees, but it will also provide them with the flexibility to avoid taking out costly student loans. Inefficient government should not be the reason why veterans have to pay interest on loans, especially when they should have received their tuition reimbursement from the state in a timely fashion.

I’m proud to have authored this piece of legislation so our veterans will not have to worry when pursuing their hard-earned education. As Wisconsinites, it’s the least we can do to say thank you.

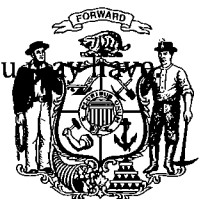
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October 10, 2017

Chairperson Murphy, Vice-Chair Tranel and Members of the Assembly Committee on Colleges and Universities:

The Veterans of Foreign Wars-Department of Wisconsin, expresses its SUPPORT for AB 512 relating to: the tuition grant program for National Guard members administered by the Department of Military Affairs.

Wisconsin has a proud history of its citizens serving in our nation's military from the Civil War until now, many of those being members of the Wisconsin Army and Air National Guard. Our state's reputation for its military history and excellent treatment of our veterans is made loud and clear via our great veteran benefits and education assistance such as the Wisconsin G.I. Bill and the DMA's tuition assistance program. AB 512 assures that when the state tells our citizen soldiers that 100% of their tuition will be covered, that it truly covers it 100%. We thank Representative Kuglitsch, as well as all co-sponsors, for bringing this legislation forth.

The VFW of WI encourages each member of this committee to vote for passage of AB 512 and we look forward to seeing it signed in to law.

Jason E. Johns

State Legislative Committee

Veterans of Foreign Wars-Department of Wisconsin

Table 2: UW System Schedule of Differential Tuitions for the 2016-17 Academic Year

Institution	Program	Amount	Year Implemented
Eau Claire	All Undergraduates	\$163 per year.	1997
Stout	Customized instruction	Charges market rates for customized programs, certificates, and courses typically offered during the summer, evenings, or weekends.	1999
Stout	All Students	5% of resident undergraduate and graduate tuition, \$11.13 per credit for undergraduates and \$17.50 per credit for graduates in 2016-17.	1999
Whitewater	All Undergraduates	3.5% of resident undergraduate tuition, \$221 per year in 2016-17.	2002
La Crosse	All Students	\$140 per year in 2016-17, increases by 6% annually. Has not increased since 2012-13 due to the tuition freeze.	2003
Oshkosh	All Undergraduates	\$124 per year in 2016-17, increases by 3% annually. Has not increased since 2012-13 due to the tuition freeze.	2003
Superior	All Undergraduates	\$237 per year.	2003
Milwaukee	Peck School of Arts	\$21.80 per credit for undergraduate courses other than those satisfying general education requirements.	2004
Milwaukee	College of Engineering and Applied Science	\$21.63 per credit for all undergraduate and graduate courses.	2004
Milwaukee	School of Business Administration	\$21.22 per credit for all 200 to 600 level courses.	2004
Milwaukee	College of Nursing	\$31.52 per credit for undergraduates enrolled in clinical major courses.	2004
Milwaukee	School of Architecture and Urban Planning	\$43 per credit for undergraduate and graduate 200 to 800 level courses, \$11.55 for 100 level courses.	2006
Madison	School of Business	\$1,000 per year for students enrolled in bachelor's degree program, \$300 per year for students enrolled in certificate program.	2007
River Falls	All Undergraduates	\$130 per year in 2016-17; would have increased to \$160 per year in 2013-14 had the Regents not been prohibited from increasing tuition.	2007
Madison	School of Engineering	\$1,400 per year for students enrolled in bachelor's degree programs.	2008
La Crosse	All Undergraduates	\$1,146 in 2016-17.	2008
Platteville	All Undergraduates	1.9% of resident undergraduate tuition, \$120 per year in 2016-17.	2008
Madison	All Undergraduates	\$1,000 for resident students and \$3,000 for nonresident students	2009
Eau Claire	All Undergraduates	\$900 in 2016-17; would have increased to \$1,200 beginning in 2013-14 if the Regents had not been prohibited from increasing tuition.	2010
Superior	Department of Natural Sciences	\$12 per credit.	2011
Stevens Point	All Undergraduates	\$400 for freshmen and sophomores, \$200 for juniors, and \$0 for seniors in 2016-17; \$400 for freshmen, sophomores, and juniors and \$200 for seniors in 2017-18; and \$400 for all undergraduates in 2018-19. 2015 Act 55 provided an exemption from the tuition freeze for the Board of Regents to implement a differential tuition at Stevens Point.	2016