

ONE HUNDRED EIGHTH LEGISLATURE

FIRST SESSION

LEGISLATIVE RESOLUTION 153

Introduced by McDonnell, 5.

PURPOSE: The purpose of this resolution is to propose an interim study to examine the fiscal impact of statutory tuition and fee waivers for various constituencies on Nebraska's public university, state colleges, and community colleges and the lack of corresponding state appropriation funding for the lost tuition and fee revenue. Currently, several statutory provisions exist or are being considered by the Legislature to require the University of Nebraska, state colleges, and community colleges to waive all or a portion of tuition and fees for various constituencies. Such waivers currently include:

(1) Section 80-411, which provides a waiver for dependents of deceased or disabled veterans of all tuition and fees after subtracting awarded federal financial aid grants and state scholarships and grants;

(2) Sections 80-901 to 80-903, which provide a waiver for qualified members of the Active Selected Reserve of seventy-five percent of tuition for a baccalaureate degree program and fifty percent of tuition for a graduate degree program;

(3) The In the Line of Duty Dependent Education Act, sections 85-2301 to 85-2306, which provides a waiver for the children of law enforcement officers and firefighters killed in the line of duty on or after April 23, 2009, of full-time undergraduate tuition and fees;

(4) The Law Enforcement Education Act, sections 85-2601 to 85-2604, which provides a waiver for law enforcement officers of one hundred percent of the resident tuition charges of any state university, state college, or community college. The officer must pursue studies leading to a degree that relates to a career in law enforcement and may receive the tuition waiver for up to five years; and

(5) Legislative Bill 447, One Hundred Eighth Legislature, First Session, 2023, that would provide a waiver for (a) any legal dependent of a law enforcement officer who agrees to reside in Nebraska for a period of five years following the use of the tuition waiver, (b) a professional firefighter who pursues studies leading to a degree in science or medicine that relates to a career in professional firefighting, (c) any legal dependent of a professional firefighter who agrees to reside in Nebraska for a period of five years following the use of the tuition waiver of one hundred percent of resident tuition charges.

The study should include a review of whether the various statutory waivers are effective in accomplishing their purposes, the cost of statutory waivers to public institutions of higher education, the impact on tuition and fees to other students, and the consistency of waivers provided.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED BY THE MEMBERS OF THE ONE HUNDRED EIGHTH LEGISLATURE OF NEBRASKA, FIRST SESSION:

1. That the Appropriations Committee of the Legislature shall be designated to conduct an interim study to carry out the purposes of this resolution.

2. That the committee shall upon the conclusion of its study make a report of its findings, together with its recommendations, to the Legislative Council or Legislature.