

**Department of Legislative Services**  
Maryland General Assembly  
2003 Session

**FISCAL AND POLICY NOTE**

House Bill 546  
Ways and Means

(Delegate McComas, *et al.*)

---

**Education - High School Diplomas - Veterans of World War II and the Korean Conflict**

---

This emergency bill allows an individual honorably discharged from military service to apply to a local board of education to obtain a high school diploma if the individual withdrew from a regular full-time public or private school during the individual's junior year in high school to enlist in the armed forces during World War II or the Korean Conflict. The individual may apply to the local board of education in the county where the individual resides or where the school from which the individual withdrew was located.

---

**Fiscal Summary**

**State Effect:** None.

**Local Effect:** Local school systems can provide diplomas to World War II and Korean War veterans with existing resources.

**Small Business Effect:** None.

---

**Analysis**

**Current Law:** Veterans may obtain a high school diploma if the individual withdrew from a regular full-time public or private school during the individual's senior year in high school to enlist in the U.S. armed forces during World War II or the Korean Conflict.

**Background:** At the 2000 session, the General Assembly approved legislation that enabled World War II veterans to obtain a high school diploma if the individual withdrew from a regular full-time public or private school during the individual's senior year in high school to enlist in the armed forces. At the 2002 session, the General Assembly extended this provision to cover honorably discharged veterans from the Korean Conflict.

Approximately 88,000 World War II veterans reside in Maryland. World War II veterans account for 18% of the total number of veterans residing in Maryland. The median age of World War II veterans is projected to be 78. Most World War II veterans (75%) are projected to be between the ages of 75 and 84. About 10% are projected to be 85 or older. The Maryland State Department of Education has received fewer than 25 requests for diplomas from eligible World War II veterans.

Over 75,000 Korean War veterans reside in Maryland. Korean War veterans account for 15% of the total number of veterans residing in Maryland. The median age of Korean War veterans is projected to be 70. Most Korean War veterans (85%) are projected to be between the ages of 65 and 74. About 4% are projected to be 80 or older. About 18% of male Korean War veterans have less than a high school education, while nearly half have at least some college education.

---

### **Additional Information**

**Prior Introductions:** A similar bill that applied only to World War II veterans was introduced at the 2002 session as SB 897. The bill received a favorable report from the Senate Education, Health, and Environmental Affairs Committee and was adopted by the Senate. The bill received a favorable report from the House Ways and Means Committee and was adopted by the House on second reading. The House, however, did not take final action on the bill.

**Cross File:** None.

**Information Sources:** Maryland State Department of Education, U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs, Department of Legislative Services

**Fiscal Note History:** First Reader - February 18, 2003  
lc/jr

---

Analysis by: Hiram L. Burch Jr.

Direct Inquiries to:  
(410) 946-5510  
(301) 970-5510