

CHAPTER 604

(Senate Bill 608)

AN ACT concerning

Education – Veterans of the Afghanistan and Iraq Conflicts Scholarship – Extension

FOR the purpose of extending the date by which the Office of Student Financial Assistance may award an initial Veterans of the Afghanistan and Iraq Conflicts Scholarship; extending the date by which the Office may renew a Veterans of the Afghanistan and Iraq Conflicts Scholarship under certain circumstances; making certain technical changes; and generally relating to the Veterans of the Afghanistan and Iraq Conflicts Scholarship.

BY repealing and reenacting, with amendments,

Article – Education

Section 18–604

Annotated Code of Maryland

(2006 Replacement Volume and 2007 Supplement)

SECTION 1. BE IT ENACTED BY THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF MARYLAND, That the Laws of Maryland read as follows:

Article – Education

18–604.

(a) For purposes of this section, an individual served in the Afghanistan or Iraq conflict if the individual was a member of the uniform services of the United States who served in:

(1) Afghanistan or contiguous air space, as defined in federal regulations, on or after October 24, 2001, and before a terminal date to be prescribed by the United States Secretary of Defense; or

(2) Iraq or contiguous waters or air space, as defined in federal regulations, on or after March 19, 2003, and before a terminal date to be prescribed by the United States Secretary of Defense.

(b) There is a Veterans of the Afghanistan and Iraq Conflicts Scholarship.

(c) An individual may apply to the Office for a scholarship under this section if the individual:

- (1) Is a resident of Maryland;
- (2)
 - (i) Is accepted for admission or enrolled in the regular undergraduate program at an eligible institution; or
 - (ii) Is accepted for admission or enrolled in a 2-year terminal certificate program in which the course work is acceptable for transfer credit for an accredited baccalaureate program in an eligible institution; and
- (3)
 - (i)
 1. Is a veteran, as defined under § 9-901 of the State Government Article, who served in the Afghanistan or Iraq conflict;
 2. Is an active duty member of the armed forces who served in the Afghanistan or Iraq conflict; or
 3. Is a member of a reserve component of the armed forces of the United States or the Maryland National Guard who was activated as a result of the Afghanistan or Iraq conflict described in subsection (a) of this section; or
 - (ii) Is a son, daughter, or spouse of:
 1. A veteran or active duty member of the armed forces who is serving or has served in the Afghanistan or Iraq conflict; or
 2. A member of the reserve or Maryland National Guard who was activated as a result of the Afghanistan or Iraq conflict described in subsection (a) of this section.

(d) A scholarship awarded under this section shall supplement any federal education benefits for which a recipient qualifies as a result of an individual's military service or status as a dependent of a member of the armed forces or of a veteran of the armed forces.

(e) (1) Each scholarship may be used, at any eligible institution, to pay for educational expenses as defined by the Office, including:

- (i) Tuition and mandatory fees; and
- (ii) Room and board.

(2) The annual amount of a scholarship may not exceed 50% of the equivalent annual tuition, mandatory fees, and room and board of a resident undergraduate student at the 4-year public institution of higher education within the University System of Maryland, other than the University of Maryland University

College and University of Maryland, Baltimore, with the highest annual expenses for a full-time resident undergraduate.

(f) A scholarship recipient shall maintain a grade point average of at least 2.5 on a 4.0 scale.

(g) Each recipient of a scholarship under this section may hold the award for 5 years of full-time study or 8 years of part-time study.

(h) A scholarship recipient shall file for federal and State financial aid by March 1 of each year.

(i) (1) The Office may not award an initial scholarship to an individual [specified in subsection (c)(3) of this section] after June 30, [2012] **2016**.

(2) The Office may renew a scholarship after June 30, [2012] **2016**, if the individual received an initial scholarship before that date.

(j) A Senator or Delegate may authorize the Office to award all or a portion of the funds authorized under Subtitles 4 and 5 of this title to eligible recipients of scholarships awarded under this section.

(k) (1) Funds for the Veterans of the Afghanistan and Iraq Conflicts Scholarship shall be as provided in the annual budget of the Commission by the Governor.

(2) (i) There is a Veterans of the Afghanistan and Iraq Conflicts Scholarship Fund in the Commission.

(ii) The Commission:

1. May accept any gift or grant from any person or corporation for the Veterans of the Afghanistan and Iraq Conflicts Scholarship Fund;

2. Shall use any gift or grant that it receives for a scholarship from the Veterans of the Afghanistan and Iraq Conflicts Scholarship Fund; and

3. Shall deposit any gift or grant that it receives for the Veterans of the Afghanistan and Iraq Conflicts Scholarship Fund with the State Treasurer in a nonbudgeted account.

(3) (i) At the end of the fiscal year, the Commission shall prepare an annual report on the Veterans of the Afghanistan and Iraq Conflicts Scholarship Fund that includes an accounting of all financial receipts and expenditures to and from the Fund.

(ii) The Commission shall submit a copy of the report to the General Assembly as provided under § 2-1246 of the State Government Article.

SECTION 2. AND BE IT FURTHER ENACTED, That this Act shall take effect October 1, 2008.

Approved by the Governor, May 22, 2008.