

SENATE BILL 7

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(PRE-FILED)

6lr0611
CF HB 720

By: ~~Senator Simonaire~~ Senators Simonaire, Attar, Brooks, Carozza, Feldman, Gallion, Harris, Hester, Kagan, and Watson ~~Watson~~, Salling, Augustine, Bailey, Beidle, Benson, Charles, Corderman, Ellis, Ferguson, Folden, Gile, Guzzone, Hayes, Henson, Hershey, Hettleman, Jackson, James, Jennings, King, Kramer, Lam, Lewis Young, Love, Mautz, McCray, McKay, Muse, Ready, Rosapepe, Smith, Sydnor, Waldstreicher, A. Washington, M. Washington, West, and Zucker

Requested: June 30, 2025

Introduced and read first time: January 14, 2026

Assigned to: Education, Energy, and the Environment

Committee Report: Favorable with amendments

Senate action: Adopted with floor amendments

Read second time: March 3, 2026

CHAPTER _____

1 AN ACT concerning

2 **Higher Education – Douglas J. J. Peters Veterans of the Afghanistan and Iraq**
3 **Conflicts Scholarship – Repeal of Termination Date**

4 FOR the purpose of repealing the prohibition on awarding the Douglas J. J. Peters Veterans
5 of the Afghanistan and Iraq Conflicts Scholarship after a certain date; repealing the
6 limitation on renewing the Douglas J. J. Peters Veterans of the Afghanistan and Iraq
7 Conflicts Scholarship if the scholarship recipient received an initial scholarship
8 before a certain date; and generally relating to the Douglas J. J. Peters Veterans of
9 the Afghanistan and Iraq Conflicts Scholarship.

10 BY repealing and reenacting, with amendments,
11 Article – Education
12 Section 18–604
13 Annotated Code of Maryland
14 (2022 Replacement Volume and 2025 Supplement)

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

EXPLANATION: CAPITALS INDICATE MATTER ADDED TO EXISTING LAW.

[Brackets] indicate matter deleted from existing law.

Underlining indicates amendments to bill.

~~Strike out~~ indicates matter stricken from the bill by amendment or deleted from the law by amendment.



Article – Education

1

2 18–604.

3 (a) For purposes of this section, an individual served in the Afghanistan or Iraq
4 conflict if the individual was an active service member who served in:

5 (1) Afghanistan or contiguous air space, as defined in federal regulations,
6 on or after October 24, 2001; or

7 (2) Iraq or contiguous waters or air space, as defined in federal regulations,
8 on or after March 19, 2003.

9 (b) There is a Douglas J. J. Peters Veterans of the Afghanistan and Iraq Conflicts
10 Scholarship.

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

13 (1) Is a resident of Maryland;

14 (2) (i) Is accepted for admission or enrolled in the regular
15 undergraduate program at an eligible institution; or

16 (ii) Is accepted for admission or enrolled in a 2–year terminal
17 certificate program in which the course work is acceptable for transfer credit for an
18 accredited baccalaureate program in an eligible institution; and

19 (3) (i) 1. Is a veteran who served in the Afghanistan or Iraq conflict;

20 2. Is an active service member who served in the Afghanistan
21 or Iraq conflict; or

22 3. Is a member of a reserve component who was activated as
23 a result of the Afghanistan or Iraq conflict described in subsection (a) of this section; or

24 (ii) Is a son, daughter, stepson, stepdaughter, or spouse of:

25 1. A veteran or an active service member who is serving or
26 has served in the Afghanistan or Iraq conflict; or

27 2. A member of the reserve component who was activated as
28 a result of the Afghanistan or Iraq conflict described in subsection (a) of this section.

1 (d) A scholarship awarded under this section may supplement, but is not
2 contingent on, any federal education benefits for which a recipient qualifies as a result of
3 an individual's service or status as a dependent of an active service member or of a veteran.

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

6 (i) Tuition and mandatory fees; and

7 (ii) Room and board.

8 (2) The annual amount of a scholarship may not exceed 50% of the
9 equivalent annual tuition, mandatory fees, and room and board of a resident
10 undergraduate student at the 4-year public institution of higher education within the
11 University System of Maryland, other than the University of Maryland Global Campus and
12 University of Maryland, Baltimore Campus, with the highest annual expenses for a
13 full-time resident undergraduate.

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

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

18 (h) (1) A scholarship recipient is not required to submit an application for
19 federal or State financial aid.

20 (2) Scholarship recipients who file for financial aid must file by March 1 of
21 each year.

22 [(i) (1) The Office may not award an initial scholarship to an individual after
23 June 30, 2030.

24 (2) The Office may renew a scholarship after June 30, 2030, if the
25 individual received an initial scholarship before that date.]

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

29 [(k) (J) (1) Funds for the Douglas J. J. Peters Veterans of the Afghanistan
30 and Iraq Conflicts Scholarship shall be as provided in the annual budget of the Commission
31 by the Governor.

32 (2) (i) In this subsection, "Fund" means the Douglas J. J. Peters
33 Veterans of the Afghanistan and Iraq Conflicts Scholarship Fund.

1 (ii) There is a Douglas J. J. Peters Veterans of the Afghanistan and
2 Iraq Conflicts Scholarship Fund in the Commission.

3 (iii) The Commission shall administer the Fund.

4 (iv) The Fund is a special, nonlapsing fund that is not subject to §
5 7–302 of the State Finance and Procurement Article.

6 (v) The State Treasurer shall hold the Fund separately and the
7 Comptroller shall account for the Fund.

8 (vi) The Commission:

9 1. May accept any gift or grant from any person or
10 corporation for the Fund;

11 2. Shall use any gift or grant that it receives for a scholarship
12 from the Fund; and

13 3. Shall deposit any gift or grant that it receives for the Fund
14 with the State Treasurer.

15 (3) (i) At the end of the fiscal year, the Commission shall prepare an
16 annual report on the Fund that includes an accounting of all financial receipts and
17 expenditures to and from the Fund.

18 (ii) The Commission shall submit a copy of the report to the General
19 Assembly as provided under § 2–1257 of the State Government Article.

20 SECTION 2. AND BE IT FURTHER ENACTED, That this Act shall take effect July
21 1, 2026.

Approved:

Governor.

President of the Senate.

Speaker of the House of Delegates.