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 Clark

To: Universities and
 Colleges; Appropriations

COMMITTEE SUBSTITUTE
 FOR
 HOUSE BILL NO. 864

1 AN ACT TO PROVIDE FOR THE WAIVER OF TUITION AND REQUIRED FEES
 2 AT THE STATE INSTITUTIONS OF HIGHER LEARNING AND COMMUNITY AND
 3 JUNIOR COLLEGES FOR THE CHILDREN OF DECEASED VETERANS OF THE
 4 UNITED STATES ARMED FORCES OR THE MISSISSIPPI NATIONAL GUARD WHO
 5 WERE KILLED IN THE LINE OF DUTY AND THE CHILDREN OF CERTAIN
 6 DISABLED VETERANS OF THE UNITED STATES ARMED FORCES OR THE
 7 MISSISSIPPI NATIONAL GUARD; TO REQUIRE APPLICATIONS FOR A WAIVER
 8 TO INCLUDE DOCUMENTATION CONCERNING THE DECEASED VETERAN'S DEATH
 9 OR THE DECEASED VETERAN'S DEATH OR THE VETERAN'S DISABILITY; TO
 10 PROVIDE THAT TUITION MAY BE WAIVED FOR BOTH FULL-TIME AND
 11 PART-TIME STUDENTS; TO PROVIDE THAT THE BOARD OF TRUSTEES OF STATE
 12 INSTITUTIONS OF HIGHER LEARNING SHALL BE THE ADMINISTERING AGENCY
 13 OF THE TUITION WAIVER PROGRAM; AND FOR RELATED PURPOSES.

14 BE IT ENACTED BY THE LEGISLATURE OF THE STATE OF MISSISSIPPI:

15 **SECTION 1.** (1) Beginning with the 2007-2008 academic year,
 16 any resident of the State of Mississippi who is (a) the child of a
 17 deceased veteran of the United States Armed Forces or deceased
 18 veteran of the Mississippi National Guard on active federal duty
 19 who was killed in the line of duty, or (b) the child of an
 20 honorably discharged veteran of the United States Armed Forces or
 21 an honorably discharged veteran of the Mississippi National Guard
 22 whose disability occurred while on active federal duty who has a
 23 service-connected disability that is permanently and no less than
 24 seventy percent (70%) disabling according to the rules and
 25 regulations of the United States Department of Veterans Affairs,
 26 may apply for a waiver of tuition at any state institution of
 27 higher learning or public community or junior college in the
 28 state. For the purposes of this section, the term "child" means a
 29 natural child, legally adopted child or stepchild.

30 (2) A child of a deceased or disabled veteran who qualifies
 31 for a tuition waiver under this section who is enrolled in or
 32 accepted for enrollment at a state institution of higher learning

33 or a public community or junior college in Mississippi may apply
34 for a waiver of tuition. In order to be eligible, a child may not
35 have reached the age of twenty-three (23) years on the first day
36 of the semester or term for which the child is enrolling; however,
37 any child who has begun earning academic credit in furtherance of
38 an associate or baccalaureate degree or certificate program before
39 attaining the age of twenty-three (23) years whose college
40 instruction is interrupted for any reason is eligible to receive
41 academic waivers in furtherance of the degree or certificate
42 toward which the student is working, subject to the conditions
43 prescribed in subsection (3). An application must be accompanied
44 by proper proof that the deceased veteran is a veteran of the
45 United States Armed Forces or the Mississippi National Guard and
46 that the veteran was killed in the line of duty, or the veteran is
47 an honorably discharged veteran of the United States Armed Forces
48 or the Mississippi National Guard and that the veteran has a
49 service-connected disability that is permanently and no less than
50 seventy percent (70%) disabling according to the rules and
51 regulations of the United States Department of Veterans Affairs.

52 (3) A waiver of tuition awarded under this section may not
53 exceed the actual cost of tuition at the institution or college at
54 which the child of a veteran is enrolled or accepted for
55 enrollment. The amount of tuition waived for the child of a
56 disabled veteran shall be reduced by the amount that such child
57 receives from any grant under a federal educational assistance
58 program or any other source. For purposes of this section, the
59 term "tuition" means the semester or term charges and all required
60 fees; however, the term "tuition" does not include housing costs,
61 books, food, school supplies, materials, dues or fees for
62 extracurricular activities or any costs, fees or expenses for or
63 associated with a summer session. Both full-time and part-time
64 students may apply for a waiver under this section. Students
65 enrolling on a full-time basis may receive a maximum of four (4)

66 annual waivers, and in those instances when a degree program
67 requires five (5) years for completion, five (5) annual waivers.
68 The number of waivers which may be granted to a student attending
69 school on a part-time basis may not exceed the length of time
70 required to complete the associate or baccalaureate degree or
71 certificate program toward which the student is working. A person
72 who has a baccalaureate degree is not eligible for a waiver of
73 tuition under this section, and any person who has an associate
74 degree may receive waivers only in furtherance of a baccalaureate
75 degree.

76 (4) As a condition for renewal of a waiver of tuition, a
77 student must make steady academic progress toward a certificate or
78 associate or baccalaureate degree, as certified by the
79 institution's registrar, and must maintain a cumulative grade
80 point average of at least 2.00 calculated on a 4.00 scale at the
81 end of each term.

82 (5) The Board of Trustees of State Institutions of Higher
83 Learning and the State Board for Community and Junior Colleges
84 jointly shall promulgate rules and regulations necessary to carry
85 out the purposes of this section. The Board of Trustees of State
86 Institutions of Higher Learning is the administering agency of the
87 tuition waiver program.

88 (6) It is the intent of the Legislature that all children of
89 deceased or disabled veterans who are eligible for a waiver of
90 tuition under this section be granted a waiver provided that
91 monies are specifically appropriated by the Legislature to
92 sufficiently reimburse the state institutions of higher learning
93 and public community and junior colleges for the losses they incur
94 in implementing the tuition waiver program. If the Legislature
95 specifically appropriates monies to implement the program but such
96 funding is insufficient at a state institution or community or
97 junior college to provide a waiver of tuition for all eligible
98 applicants at that institution or college, the board shall grant

99 the tuition waivers to first-time students on a first-come,
100 first-served basis; however, priority consideration must be given
101 to persons previously receiving waivers under this section who are
102 making steady academic progress toward completion of a certificate
103 program or associate or baccalaureate degree.

104 **SECTION 2.** This act shall take effect and be in force from
105 and after July 1, 2007.