

By: Senator(s) Tate

To: Veterans and Military  
Affairs; Universities and  
Colleges

SENATE BILL NO. 2444

1 AN ACT TO AMEND SECTION 37-106-41, TO ALLOW CERTAIN VETERANS  
2 TO RECEIVE FREE TUITION AT STATE-SUPPORTED UNIVERSITIES AND  
3 COMMUNITY COLLEGES BASED ON ONE MONTH FREE TUITION FOR EACH MONTH  
4 SERVED DURING A QUALIFYING PERIOD; AND FOR RELATED PURPOSES.

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

6 **SECTION 1.** Section 37-106-41, Mississippi Code of 1972, is  
7 amended as follows:

8 37-106-41. (1) If any member of the armed services, whose  
9 official house of record and residence is within the State of  
10 Mississippi, is officially reported as being either a prisoner of  
11 war or missing in action in Southeast Asia or has been a prisoner  
12 of a foreign government as the result of a military action against  
13 the United States naval vessel, Pueblo, his child or children  
14 shall be entitled to an eight-semester scholarship without cost,  
15 exclusive of books, food, school supplies, materials and dues or  
16 fees for extracurricular activities at any state-supported college  
17 or university of his choice within this state. However, no child  
18 will be entitled to receive benefits during any semester or



19 quarter when said child has reached the age of twenty-three (23)  
20 years on the first day of the semester or quarter.

21 (2) The provisions of this section shall apply to the child  
22 or children of any member of the armed services who is officially  
23 reported as being either a prisoner of war or missing in action in  
24 Southeast Asia whose spouse was a resident of this state for a  
25 period of not less than ten (10) years during her minority and is  
26 a resident or physically resides within this state and does  
27 continually reside within this state at the time of enrollment and  
28 during the enrollment, and is a resident or physically resides  
29 within this state as of April 9, 1973.

30 (3) It is further provided that the provisions of this  
31 section shall apply to the child or children of any person who was  
32 a resident of this state at the time he was inducted into the  
33 Armed Forces of the United States of America and who is either a  
34 former prisoner of war or officially reported as being a prisoner  
35 of war or missing in action in Southeast Asia and who, or his  
36 spouse if she was a resident of this state for a period of not  
37 less than ten (10) years during her minority, is a resident of  
38 this state and at the time of enrollment and during the enrollment  
39 of his child or children at any state-supported college or  
40 university in this state resided or resides in this state.

41 (4) Any applicant qualified and desiring a scholarship under  
42 this section shall apply in writing to the board. The board shall  
43 make inquiries into each such application and shall make the



investigation as it deems proper to establish and validate all claims made under this section before a scholarship is granted.

(5) In addition to the scholarship prescribed in subsections (1) through (4), the board shall establish a scholarship program allowing veterans who have served in a combat zone or have a service-connected disability to receive free tuition on a month-for-month basis at state-supported universities and community colleges.

(a) To qualify, veterans must:

(i) Be a Mississippi resident;

(ii) Have been honorably discharged;

(iii) Qualify for in-state tuition;

(iv) Not be eligible for federal educational benefits; and

(v) Have served on active duty during a wartime period and received a campaign medal for combat operations outside the U.S.; or

(vi) Have a service-connected disability rating of ten percent (10%) or more.

(b) Eligible veterans may receive one (1) month free tuition for each month served during a qualifying period. Veterans may receive a minimum of one (1) academic year and a maximum of four (4) academic years of free tuition.



67                   (c) To apply, veterans may apply to their selected  
68 school's financial aid office or the Mississippi Army National  
69 Guard Education Service Office.

70           **SECTION 2.** This act shall take effect and be in force from  
71 and after July 1, 2025.

