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 (8th), Bondurant, Broomfield, Chism, Davis,  
 Fleming, Gregory, Gunn, Hamilton (109th),  
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 Shows, Simpson, Smith (39th), Snowden, Staples, Stringer, Sullivan,  
 Upshaw, Warren, Weathersby, Palazzo, Peranich

To: Universities and  
 Colleges; Appropriations

## HOUSE BILL NO. 864

1 AN ACT TO PROVIDE FOR THE WAIVER OF TUITION, REQUIRED FEES  
 2 AND HOUSING COSTS AT THE STATE INSTITUTIONS OF HIGHER LEARNING AND  
 3 COMMUNITY AND JUNIOR COLLEGES FOR THE CHILDREN OF CERTAIN DISABLED  
 4 VETERANS OF THE UNITED STATES ARMED FORCES; TO REQUIRE  
 5 APPLICATIONS FOR A WAIVER TO INCLUDE DOCUMENTATION CONCERNING THE  
 6 VETERAN'S DISABILITY; TO PROVIDE THAT TUITION MAY BE WAIVED FOR  
 7 BOTH FULL-TIME AND PART-TIME STUDENTS; TO PROVIDE THAT THE BOARD  
 8 OF TRUSTEES OF STATE INSTITUTIONS OF HIGHER LEARNING SHALL BE THE  
 9 ADMINISTERING AGENCY OF THE TUITION WAIVER PROGRAM; AND FOR  
 10 RELATED PURPOSES.

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

12 **SECTION 1.** (1) Beginning with the 2007-2008 academic year,  
 13 any resident of the State of Mississippi who is the child of an  
 14 honorably discharged veteran of the United States Armed Forces who  
 15 has a service-connected disability that is permanently and no less  
 16 than twenty percent (20%) disabling according to the rules and  
 17 regulations of the United States Department of Veterans Affairs  
 18 may apply for a waiver of tuition at any state institution of  
 19 higher learning or public community or junior college in the  
 20 state. For the purposes of this section, the term "child" means a  
 21 natural child, legally adopted child or stepchild.

22 (2) A veteran's child who qualifies for a tuition waiver  
 23 under this section who is enrolled in or accepted for enrollment  
 24 at a state institution of higher learning or a public community or  
 25 junior college in Mississippi may apply for a waiver of tuition.  
 26 In order to be eligible, a child may not have reached the age of  
 27 twenty-three (23) years on the first day of the quarter, semester,  
 28 trimester or term for which the child is enrolling; however, any  
 29 child who has begun earning academic credit in furtherance of an  
 30 associate or baccalaureate degree or certificate program before  
 31 attaining the age of twenty-three (23) years whose college

32 instruction is interrupted for any reason is eligible to receive  
33 academic waivers in furtherance of the degree or certificate  
34 toward which the student is working, subject to the conditions  
35 prescribed in subsection (3). An application must be accompanied  
36 by proper proof that the veteran is an honorably discharged  
37 veteran of the United States Armed Forces and that the veteran has  
38 a service-connected disability that is permanently and no less  
39 than twenty percent (20%) disabling according to the rules and  
40 regulations of the United States Department of Veterans Affairs.

41 (3) A waiver of tuition awarded under this section may not  
42 exceed the actual cost of tuition at the institution or college at  
43 which the child of a veteran is enrolled or accepted for  
44 enrollment. For purposes of this section, the term "tuition"  
45 means the quarter, semester, trimester or term charges, all  
46 required fees and housing costs; however, the term "tuition" does  
47 not include books, food, school supplies, materials, dues or fees  
48 for extracurricular activities. Both full-time and part-time  
49 students may apply for a waiver under this section. Students  
50 enrolling on a full-time basis may receive a maximum of four (4)  
51 annual waivers, and in those instances when a degree program  
52 requires five (5) years for completion, five (5) annual waivers.  
53 The number of waivers which may be granted to a student attending  
54 school on a part-time basis may not exceed the length of time  
55 required to complete the associate or baccalaureate degree or  
56 certificate program toward which the student is working. A person  
57 who has a baccalaureate degree is not eligible for a waiver of  
58 tuition under this section, and any person who has an associate  
59 degree may receive waivers only in furtherance of a baccalaureate  
60 degree.

61 (4) As a condition for renewal of a waiver of tuition, a  
62 student must make steady academic progress toward a certificate or  
63 associate or baccalaureate degree, as certified by the  
64 institution's registrar, and must maintain a cumulative grade

65 point average of at least 2.00 calculated on a 4.00 scale at the  
66 end of each term.

67 (5) The Board of Trustees of State Institutions of Higher  
68 Learning and the State Board for Community and Junior Colleges  
69 jointly shall promulgate rules and regulations necessary to carry  
70 out the purposes of this section. The Board of Trustees of State  
71 Institutions of Higher Learning is the administering agency of the  
72 tuition waiver program.

73 (6) It is the intent of the Legislature that all children of  
74 veterans who are eligible for a waiver of tuition under this  
75 section be granted a waiver. If funding at a state institution or  
76 community or junior college is insufficient to provide a waiver of  
77 tuition for all eligible applicants at that institution or  
78 college, the board shall grant the tuition waivers to first-time  
79 students on a first-come, first-served basis; however, priority  
80 consideration must be given to persons previously receiving  
81 waivers under this section who are making steady academic progress  
82 toward completion of a certificate program or associate or  
83 baccalaureate degree.

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