

By: Representative Staples

To: Universities and
Colleges; Appropriations

HOUSE BILL NO. 1111

1 AN ACT TO PROVIDE FOR THE WAIVER OF TUITION AT THE STATE
2 INSTITUTIONS OF HIGHER LEARNING AND THE COMMUNITY AND JUNIOR
3 COLLEGES FOR CERTAIN VETERANS OF THE UNITED STATES ARMED FORCES
4 WHO SERVED DURING A PERIOD OF WAR OR ARMED CONFLICT; TO REQUIRE
5 APPLICATIONS FOR A WAIVER TO INCLUDE DOCUMENTATION CONCERNING AN
6 APPLICANT'S MILITARY SERVICE; TO PROVIDE THAT TUITION MAY BE
7 WAIVED FOR BOTH FULL-TIME AND PART-TIME STUDENTS; TO PROVIDE THAT
8 THE BOARD OF TRUSTEES OF STATE INSTITUTIONS OF HIGHER LEARNING
9 SHALL BE THE ADMINISTERING AGENCY OF THE TUITION WAIVER PROGRAM;
10 AND FOR 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 qualified resident of the State of Mississippi who is an
14 honorably discharged veteran of the United States Armed Forces who
15 served for a period of no less than one (1) year on active duty
16 during a period of war or armed conflict may apply for a waiver of
17 tuition at any state institution of higher learning or public
18 community or junior college in the state.

19 (2) A qualified veteran who is enrolled in or accepted for
20 enrollment at a state institution of higher learning or a public
21 community or junior college in Mississippi may apply for a waiver
22 of tuition under this section. In order to be eligible, a veteran
23 must have been a resident of the State of Mississippi for no less
24 than four (4) years before being deployed during a period of war
25 or armed conflict. An application must be accompanied by proper
26 proof that the applicant is an honorably discharged veteran of the
27 United States Armed Forces and that the veteran served no less
28 than one (1) year during a period of war or armed conflict.

29 (3) A waiver of tuition awarded under this section may not
30 exceed the actual cost of tuition at the institution or college at
31 which the veteran is enrolled or accepted for enrollment. For

32 purposes of this section, the term "tuition" means the semester,
33 trimester, quarter or term charges and any fees required of all
34 students as a condition of enrollment; however, the term "tuition"
35 does not include books, housing, food, school supplies, materials,
36 dues or fees for extra-curricular activities. Both full-time and
37 part-time students may apply for a waiver under this section.
38 Students enrolling on a full-time basis may receive a maximum of
39 four (4) annual waivers, and in those instances when a degree
40 program requires five (5) years for completion, five (5) annual
41 waivers. The number of waivers which may be made to a student
42 attending school on a part-time basis may not exceed the length of
43 time required to complete the associate or baccalaureate degree or
44 certificate program toward which the student is working.

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

51 (5) The Board of Trustees of State Institutions of Higher
52 Learning and the State Board for Community and Junior Colleges
53 jointly shall promulgate rules and regulations necessary to carry
54 out the purposes of this section, which rules and regulations must
55 prescribe the information that a qualified veteran must present to
56 a state institution or community or junior college to document the
57 veteran's military service. The Board of Trustees of State
58 Institutions of Higher Learning is the administering agency of the
59 tuition waiver program.

60 (6) It is the intent of the Legislature that all veterans
61 who are eligible for a waiver of tuition under this section be
62 granted a waiver. If funding at a state institution or community
63 or junior college is insufficient to provide a waiver of tuition
64 for all eligible applicants at that institution or college, the

65 board shall grant the tuition waivers to first-time students on a
66 first-come, first-served basis; however, priority consideration
67 must be given to persons previously receiving waivers under this
68 section who are making steady academic progress toward completion
69 of a certificate program or associate or baccalaureate degree.

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