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3 SENATE V&MA COMMITTEE SUBSTITUTE FOR SB119

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8 SYNOPSIS: Under existing law, the Alabama G.I. and
9 Dependents' Educational Benefit Act provides
10 scholarship benefits for postsecondary education to
11 the dependents of veterans based on certain
12 conditions.

13 This bill would provide that the scholarship
14 benefits are provided for instruction at any public
15 or private two-year or four-year institution of
16 higher education that is physically located in the
17 state and receives state funds.

18 This bill would also remove an obsolete
19 program that allows certain veterans to take
20 correspondence courses.

21
22 A BILL

23 TO BE ENTITLED

24 AN ACT

25
26 Relating to the Alabama G.I. and Dependents'
27 Educational Benefit Act; to amend Sections 31-6-2, as amended

1 by Act 2021-444, 2021 Regular Session, 31-6-2.1, as added by
2 Act 2021-444, 2021 Regular Session, 31-6-3, 31-6-4, as amended
3 by Act 2021-84, 2021 Regular Session, 31-6-5, 31-6-6, 31-6-9,
4 31-6-11, 31-6-12, 31-6-13, 31-6-14, 31-6-15, 31-6-15.1, and
5 31-6-16, Code of Alabama 1975, to provide that scholarship
6 benefits may be used for instruction at any public or private
7 two-year or four-year institution of higher education located
8 in the state that receives state funds; to remove an obsolete
9 correspondence course benefit; to make nonsubstantive,
10 technical revisions to update the existing code language to
11 current style; and to repeal Section 31-6-8, Code of Alabama
12 1975, relating to Alabama G.I. Scholarships.

13 BE IT ENACTED BY THE LEGISLATURE OF ALABAMA:

14 Section 1. Sections 31-6-2, as amended by Act
15 2021-444, 2021 Regular Session, 31-6-2.1, as added by Act
16 2021-444, 2021 Regular Session, 31-6-3, 31-6-4, as amended by
17 Act 2021-84, 2021 Regular Session, 31-6-5, 31-6-6, 31-6-9,
18 31-6-11, 31-6-12, 31-6-13, 31-6-14, 31-6-15, 31-6-15.1, and
19 31-6-16 of the Code of Alabama 1975, are amended to read as
20 follows:

21 "§31-6-2.

22 "For the purposes of this chapter, the following
23 terms shall have the meanings ascribed to them by this
24 section:

25 "(1) ARMED FORCES. ~~The term includes~~ Includes the
26 United States Army, Air Force, Navy, Marine Corps, Space
27 Force, and Coast Guard. ~~The term also includes the units of~~

1 those branches of the services having women troops and the
2 Army, Navy, Marine Corps, and Coast Guard Nurse Corps.

3 "(2) COMPREHENSIVE TRANSITION AND POSTSECONDARY
4 PROGRAM FOR STUDENTS WITH INTELLECTUAL DISABILITIES. Has the
5 same meaning as in 20 U.S.C. § 1140.

6 "(3) HUSBAND. Spouse.

7 "(3) QUALIFYING PRIVATE SCHOOL. Any regionally
8 accredited private two-year or four-year institution of higher
9 education physically located in the state that receives a
10 direct appropriation from the state or whose resident students
11 may receive appropriations from the state through the Alabama
12 Student Grant Program.

13 "(4) QUALIFYING SCHOOL. An institution which is
14 either a qualifying state school or a qualifying private
15 school as defined by this chapter.

16 "(5) QUALIFYING STATE SCHOOL. An Alabama public
17 two-year or four-year institution of higher education.

18 "(6) SPOUSE. Husband or wife.

19 "(7) TUITION. Fees for instruction.

20 "(8) TUITION AND FEES. All fees known and classed
21 as instructional fees.

22 "(9) WIDOW or WIDOWER. An individual whose spouse
23 is deceased and who has not remarried.

24 "(7) WIFE. Spouse.

25 "§31-6-2.1.

26 "For the purposes of this chapter, in addition to
27 any other benefits granted under this chapter, any child of a

disabled or deceased veteran or otherwise eligible for educational benefits under this chapter who is admitted to attend and attends a comprehensive transition and postsecondary program for students with intellectual disabilities at a state four-year ~~college or university~~ institution of higher education shall be eligible to receive benefits equal to the benefits provided pursuant to this chapter to any other child eligible for educational benefits in an undergraduate course of study at a state four-year ~~college or university~~ institution of higher education under this chapter without regard as to whether the program is a degree, certificate, or non-degree program.

"§31-6-3.

"Tuition benefits received pursuant to Sections 31-6-4 through 31-6-6 shall be called "Alabama G.I. Dependents' Scholarships." ~~Tuition benefits received under Section 31-6-8 shall be called "Alabama G.I. Scholarships."~~

"§31-6-4.

"(a) Any child whose father or mother:

"(1) Was killed or died in line of duty or is listed as missing in action or is/was a prisoner of war or whose death or permanent total disabilities were service-connected while serving as a member of the armed forces;

"(2) Died from a disability incurred from military service, as established by the State Department of Veterans' Affairs, after having been discharged under conditions other than dishonorable and after having served at least 90 days

1 consecutively in the armed forces prior to and/or subsequent
2 to the date on which the disability occurred, or who was
3 honorably discharged by reason of ~~wartime~~, a qualifying
4 service-connected disability after serving less than 90 days;

5 " (3) Was killed or died while on state active duty
6 status as defined in Section 31-12-1, or whose death results
7 proximately and within three years from an injury received
8 while on state active duty status; or

9 " (4) Has been assigned 100 percent permanent or
10 total disability rated by the United States Veterans'
11 Administration, or was discharged or retired from the armed
12 forces with a 40 percent or more disability and maintained
13 that percentage ~~(such person to be deemed to be a disabled~~
14 ~~veteran)~~; may attend any ~~Alabama state institution of higher~~
15 ~~learning, college, or university qualifying school~~ for a
16 period of five standard academic years, not to exceed 45
17 months or the equivalent of 45 months if enrolled part-time,
18 pursuant to the tuition reimbursement guidelines as provided
19 in subsection (c) ~~for such college or university attendance,~~
20 ~~or any such child may take a prescribed course in any Alabama~~
21 ~~state-supported community or technical college for the length~~
22 ~~of any prescribed course of study of his or her choosing, and~~
23 ~~if such course does not require the full 45 months, then~~
24 ~~training for the remainder of the 45 months' entitlement may~~
25 ~~be taken at a state-supported college or university only,~~
26 ~~pursuant to the tuition reimbursement guidelines as provided~~
27 ~~in subsection (c)~~. Training under this section must be

initiated prior to the child's thirtieth birthday, and must be completed within eight years after its initiation, except for delays caused by military service during the training period, and in no case may training be received under this chapter beyond the thirty-eighth birthday of ~~such~~ the child.

"(b) ~~Except as provided in Section 31-6-11(e), the~~
The educational benefits provided by this section to children
making application for benefits for the first time beginning
with the fall term of the 2014-2015 academic year, and
thereafter, shall be limited to undergraduate courses of study
only, and the value of tuition paid shall be limited to the
in-state tuition rate of the ~~Alabama state institution of~~
~~higher learning, college, or university~~ qualifying school
attended.

"(c) For those first filing for benefits under this chapter on or after July 31, 2017, and for those attending a qualifying private school, the educational benefit shall be for tuition reimbursement and books and fees reimbursement. The value of tuition paid per semester hour (or equivalent) shall be limited to the rate of the Department of Defense Tuition Assistance Cap. The value of the books and fees paid per semester shall be limited to one thousand dollars (\$1,000) per student.

"(d) For the purpose of the minimum disability requirement provided for in subdivision (a)(4), the dependent of any veteran whose disability rating as of July 31, 2017, is at least 20 percent but less than 40 percent shall qualify for

1 the benefits of this chapter, provided that the dependent
2 shall file application for such benefits before July 31, 2023,
3 and the dependent is reasonably expected to be eligible to
4 attend ~~an Alabama institution of higher learning, college, or~~
5 ~~university a qualifying school~~ in the next academic year.

6 "§31-6-5.

7 "(a) Any ~~wife or husband spouse~~ or ~~unmarried~~ widow
8 ~~or widower~~ whose spouse, during their marriage:

9 "(1) Was killed or died in the line of duty or is
10 listed as missing in action or is/was a prisoner of war while
11 serving as a member of the armed forces;

12 "(2) Died from a disability incurred from military
13 service; or

14 "(3) Is 100 percent permanently and totally
15 disabled, whose permanent and total disabilities were
16 service-connected; shall be entitled to training in any
17 ~~Alabama state-supported college or university qualifying~~
18 ~~school~~ for a period of five standard academic years, not to
19 exceed 45 months, or to training for the equivalent of 45
20 months if enrolled part-time ~~or to training in a prescribed~~
21 ~~course in a state-supported community or technical college,~~
22 ~~and if such course does not require the full 45 months, then~~
23 ~~training for the remainder of such 45 months' entitlement may~~
24 ~~be taken at a state-supported college or university only,~~
25 pursuant to the tuition reimbursement guidelines as provided
26 in subsection (c). One change of program will be allowed
27 without counseling. All training received under this section

1 must be completed within eight years after ~~the beginning date~~
2 ~~of the course its initiation.~~ This section shall not apply to
3 the spouse of any ~~such~~ deceased serviceman or veteran who has
4 remarried prior to applying for and obtaining educational
5 benefits under this section, and should any such spouse of
6 ~~such~~ ~~the~~ deceased serviceman or veteran remarry during the
7 time he or she is in attendance upon any of the qualifying
8 schools, ~~colleges, or universities~~ mentioned in this section,
9 then he or she shall pay tuition and fees for the course of
10 study or attendance upon ~~such~~ the qualifying school, ~~college,~~
11 ~~or university~~ from the time of the remarriage. ~~The benefits~~
12 ~~provided under this section shall be in addition to federal~~
13 ~~government benefits.~~

14 "(b) ~~Except as provided in Section 31-6-11(e), the~~
15 The educational benefits provided by this section to ~~wives,~~
16 ~~husbands, and unmarried spouses and widows or widowers~~ making
17 application for benefits for the first time beginning with the
18 fall term of the 2014-2015 academic year, and thereafter,
19 shall be limited to undergraduate courses of study only, and
20 the value of tuition paid shall be limited to the in-state
21 tuition rate of the ~~Alabama state-supported college or~~
22 ~~university~~ qualifying school attended.

23 "(c) For those first filing for benefits under this
24 chapter on or after July 31, 2017, and for those attending a
25 qualifying private school, the educational benefit shall be
26 for tuition reimbursement and books and fees reimbursement.
27 The value of tuition paid per semester hour (or equivalent)

1 shall be limited to the rate of the Department of Defense
2 Tuition Assistance Cap. The value of the books and fees paid
3 per semester shall be limited to ~~\$1,000~~ one thousand dollars
4 (\$1,000) per student.

5 "§31-6-6.

6 "(a) The spouse and children of any veteran who is
7 suffering from 40 to 90 percent service-connected disability
8 brought about from service in the Armed Forces of the United
9 States, or the ~~unmarried~~ widow or ~~widower~~ and children of a
10 deceased veteran who was suffering from 40 percent or more of
11 service-connected disability at the time of death, ~~provided~~
12 ~~such disabilities as are mentioned herein are incurred from~~
13 ~~military service,~~ as established by the State Department of
14 Veterans' Affairs, shall be entitled to the following
15 educational advantages and opportunities:

16 "(1) The spouse or ~~unmarried~~ widow or ~~widower~~, as
17 the case may be, shall be entitled to up to 27 months of
18 schooling, or the equivalent of 27 months if enrolled
19 part-time, in any ~~Alabama state-supported institution of~~
20 ~~higher learning, college, or university, or to a prescribed~~
21 ~~course in any Alabama state-supported community or technical~~
22 ~~college qualifying school,~~ pursuant to the tuition
23 reimbursement guidelines as provided in subsection (d). One
24 change of program will be allowed without counseling. ~~It is~~
25 ~~provided, however, that all~~ All training received at ~~state~~
26 ~~institutions of higher learning or state-supported community~~
27 ~~or technical college qualifying schools~~ under this subdivision

1 must be completed within a period of six years after ~~the~~
2 ~~beginning date of such two-year course or such prescribed~~
3 ~~course its initiation.~~

4 "(2) Each child of ~~such a~~ disabled veteran shall be
5 entitled to five standard academic years, or the equivalent of
6 45 months if enrolled part-time, in any ~~Alabama~~
7 ~~state-supported institution of higher learning, college, or~~
8 ~~university, or to a prescribed course at an Alabama~~
9 ~~state-supported community or technical college. If the course~~
10 ~~of training at the community or technical college does not~~
11 ~~require the full time to which such child is entitled~~
12 ~~hereunder, then the remaining entitlement may be taken in a~~
13 ~~state-supported college or university only, qualifying school~~
14 pursuant to the tuition reimbursement guidelines as provided
15 in subsection (d). One change of program will be allowed
16 without counseling. Training under this subdivision must be
17 initiated prior to the child's twenty-sixth birthday, and must
18 be completed within eight years after its initiation, except
19 for delays caused by military service during the training
20 period, and in no case may training be received under this
21 section beyond the thirty-fourth birthday of ~~such the~~ child.

22 "(b) For the purpose of the minimum disability
23 requirement provided for in subsection (a), the dependent of
24 any veteran whose disability rating as of July 31, 2017, is at
25 least 20 percent but less than 40 percent shall qualify for
26 the benefits of this chapter, provided that the dependent
27 shall file application for ~~such~~ benefits before July 31, 2023,

1 and the dependent is reasonably expected to be eligible to
2 attend ~~an Alabama institution of higher learning, college or~~
3 ~~university a qualifying school~~ in the next academic year.

4 "(c) ~~Except as provided in Section 31-6-11(e), the~~
5 ~~The~~ educational benefits provided by this section to spouses,
6 children, and ~~unmarried~~ widows ~~and~~ widowers making application
7 for benefits for the first time beginning with the fall term
8 of the 2014-2015 academic year, and thereafter, shall be
9 limited to undergraduate courses of study only, and the value
10 of tuition paid shall be limited to the in-state tuition rate
11 of the ~~Alabama state-supported institution of higher learning,~~
12 ~~college, or university qualifying school~~ attended.

13 "(d) For those first filing for benefits under this
14 chapter on or after July 31, 2017, and for those attending a
15 qualifying private school, the educational benefit shall be
16 for tuition reimbursement and books and fees reimbursement.
17 The value of tuition paid per semester hour (or equivalent)
18 shall be limited to the rate of the Department of Defense
19 Tuition Assistance Cap. The value of the books and fees paid
20 per semester shall be limited to ~~\$1,000 one thousand dollars~~
21 (\$1,000) per student.

22 "(e) ~~The benefits provided under this section shall~~
23 ~~be available in addition to federal government benefits. Any~~
24 ~~child, spouse, or unmarried widow who was denied full~~
25 ~~entitlement, 27 or 45 months, whichever the case may be, shall~~
26 ~~have the remainder of their entitlement reinstated under this~~
27 ~~chapter.~~

1 "§31-6-9.

2 "(a) For those dependents who first file for
3 benefits under this chapter prior to July 31, 2017, the
4 benefits provided under this chapter shall be in addition to
5 any other state or federal benefits to which that dependent
6 may be entitled.

7 "(b) For dependents who first file for benefits
8 under this chapter on or after July 31, 2017, and for those
9 attending a qualifying private school:

10 "(1) To the extent permitted by law, prior to
11 applying any benefits provided for under this chapter,
12 institutional certifying officials and financial aid officials
13 shall first apply other federal, state, institutional, and
14 third party scholarships and grants awarded to the dependent
15 for that academic period for payment of required educational
16 expenses during an academic period.

17 "(2) A completed Free Application for Federal
18 Student Aid (FAFSA), or the equivalent, must be submitted to
19 the United States Department of Education for each year in
20 which the dependent receives benefits under this chapter. The
21 dependent shall have applied for all federal student financial
22 aid grants, including, but not limited to, Pell Grants,
23 Supplemental Education Opportunity Grants, and Education and
24 Training Vouchers, identified as being available for the
25 student's application by Federal Student Aid, an office of the
26 United States Department of Education, or its successor
27 agency.

"(3) All students receiving educational benefits under this chapter and the ~~educational institutions~~ qualifying schools they attend must comply with the standards of Satisfactory Academic Progress (SAP) as required for Title IV benefits under the Higher Education Act and as defined by that ~~education institution~~ qualifying school. Those students who would no longer be eligible to receive Title IV benefits due to a failure to meet SAP standards shall no longer be eligible to receive benefits under this chapter. ~~Education institutions~~ Each qualifying school shall notify the ~~Alabama State~~ Department of ~~Veterans~~ Veterans' Affairs of any student who currently holds a certificate of eligibility for benefits under this chapter who is no longer eligible to receive benefits due to a failure to meet SAP standards and the effective date of that change in eligibility.

"(4) The dependent shall ensure that all qualifying schools ~~they attend~~ he or she attends under this program are authorized to release such personally identifiable information to the ~~Alabama~~ State Department of ~~Veterans~~ Veterans' Affairs as is required for the determination of that dependent's continued eligibility and as required for the completion of all reports required by law.

"(c) Any dependent who receives benefits under this chapter, and whose benefit period is interrupted due to accident, injury, or illness, shall have the benefit time period which is lost due to such accident, illness, or injury restored to him or her.

"(d) Notwithstanding any other provision of this chapter to the contrary, dependents of any veteran whose disability rating, if any, prior to May 23, 2017, was less than 20 percent, but who had a claim for compensation pending prior to that date which resulted in a final award by the United States Department of Veterans Affairs of at least 20 percent, shall be eligible for education benefits as the chapter read prior to May 23, 2017, if the dependent files an application for benefits under this chapter within six months of that final adjudication and provides proof satisfactory to the Alabama State Department of Veterans Veterans' Affairs that ~~they qualify~~ he or she qualifies under this exception and currently ~~meet~~ satisfies the eligibility requirements as the chapter read prior to May 23, 2017.

"§31-6-11.

"(a) Before an application of any veteran for benefits under this chapter can be approved, such veteran shall submit proof, satisfactory to the State Department of Veterans' Affairs, of all of the following:

"(1) Identification.

"(2) Having been a permanent resident of the State of Alabama for at least one year immediately prior to his or her entrance into service.

"(3) An honorable discharge or other proof of honorable termination of at least 24 months of service in the armed forces, or if such veteran was discharged or released by

~~reason of service connected disability then proof of honorable termination of less than 24 months of service is acceptable.~~

"(b) (a) Before the application of a ~~wife~~ spouse, widow, or child of a disabled veteran or a deceased veteran or serviceman for educational benefits under this chapter is approved, proof, satisfactory to the State Department of Veterans' Affairs, must be submitted of all of the following:

"(1) Establishing the identification of ~~such wife~~
the spouse, widow, or child as the ~~wife~~ spouse, widow, or
child of the veteran or serviceman, as the case may be.

"(2) Of the veteran or serviceman having been a permanent resident of the State of Alabama for at least one year immediately prior, to his or her entrance into service, or if the applicant is the ~~wife~~ spouse, widow, or child of a totally and permanently disabled veteran, then proof either of the veteran's having been a permanent resident of the State of Alabama for at least one year prior to his or her entrance into service or proof that the veteran has been a bona fide resident of this state for at least five years immediately prior to the filing of the application for benefits under this chapter or immediately prior to his or her death if the veteran is deceased.

"(3) Of the veteran or serviceman having been a permanent resident of the State of Alabama for at least two years immediately prior to the filing of the application for benefits under this chapter or has filed an Alabama income tax return as a resident individual for the previous ~~ten~~ 10 years

1 or is a current resident and was discharged from active duty
2 within the prior 12 months. If the veteran or serviceman is
3 deceased, his or her dependent may still qualify if the
4 veteran or serviceman met this residency requirement at the
5 time of his or her death. Alabama income tax return
6 information, including, but not limited to, the type of return
7 filed, necessary to show the residency requirements under this
8 chapter have been met is hereby exempted from the
9 confidentiality provisions of Section 40-2A-10, and shall be
10 provided by the Department of Revenue to the State Department
11 of Veterans Veterans' Affairs upon request. Such requests and
12 the significance of the information provided, shall be
13 requested by the State Department of Veterans Veterans'
14 Affairs as necessary when other residency information is not
15 available, and the department shall ~~promulgate~~ adopt rules and
16 procedures to effect the provisions of this section as needed.

17 "(4) Of the wife spouse, widow, or child being a
18 current resident of the State of Alabama.

19 "(5) An honorable discharge or other proof of
20 honorable termination of service of the veteran or serviceman
21 in the armed forces for a period of at least 90 days ~~between~~
22 ~~the dates mentioned in this chapter~~, or service of less than
23 90 days if the veteran or serviceman was discharged or
24 released by reason of a qualifying service-connected
25 disability.

26 "(c) ~~The service upon which any benefits are awarded~~
27 ~~under this chapter shall have been rendered during wartime or~~

1 under extrahazardous conditions, except as provided otherwise
2 in this section; and this condition of eligibility shall be
3 established by the State Department of Veterans' Affairs.

4 "(d) The service requirements provided for in
5 subsection (c) shall not apply to any person making
6 application for benefits under this chapter beginning with the
7 fall term of the 2014-2015 academic year, and thereafter.

8 "(e) Notwithstanding any other provision of this
9 chapter to the contrary, any person denied educational
10 benefits provided by this chapter based solely upon the
11 service requirements provided for in subsection (c) shall be
12 eligible to receive the benefits the person would otherwise
13 have been entitled to had their application been approved at
14 the time of initial application, except as provided otherwise
15 in this subsection. Any age limitation on the benefits
16 provided by this chapter shall be extended in like manner for
17 any such previously denied person to ensure that the person
18 has the opportunity to receive all benefits they would
19 otherwise have been entitled. In order to receive any
20 educational benefits, such the previously denied person must
21 reapply for educational benefits with the State Department of
22 Veterans' Affairs and begin use of the educational benefits no
23 later than the fall term of the 2015-2016 academic year. The
24 value of tuition paid for any such previously denied person
25 shall be limited to the in-state tuition rate of the Alabama
26 state institution of higher learning, college, or university
27 state-supported school attended.

"(f)(b) For those first filing for benefits under this chapter on or after July 31, 2017, and for those attending a qualifying private school, the educational benefit shall be for tuition reimbursement and books and fees reimbursement. The value of tuition paid per semester hour (or equivalent) shall be limited to the rate of the Department of Defense Tuition Assistance Cap. The value of the books and fees paid per semester shall be limited to \$1,000 one thousand dollars (\$1,000) per student.

"§31-6-12.

"The State Department of Veterans' Affairs is hereby charged with the duty of informing the veterans and their dependents in this state, through its county service commissioners and all other sources at its command, of the provisions of this chapter in order that those veterans and their dependents may know of the benefits provided in this chapter. The State Department of Veterans' Affairs shall furnish and assist in preparing and producing all necessary blanks, forms, and other matters necessary for the veterans, their ~~wives~~ spouses, widows, or children to obtain the benefits provided under this chapter. The State Service Commissioner shall cause to be forwarded to the ~~state~~ institution of higher learning, college or university, or ~~state~~ trade qualifying school of the applicant's choice, a certificate of eligibility and entitlement, or other necessary proof for the veteran, his ~~wife~~ or her spouse, widow, or child to obtain the benefits made available hereby.

1 "§31-6-13.

2 "The president or head of each ~~state institution of~~
3 ~~higher learning or college or university or state trade~~
4 qualifying school must inform the faculty members of each
5 respective institution of the provisions and benefits of this
6 chapter, who in turn shall inform the ~~wives spouses~~, widows,
7 and children of veterans attending such institutions as to
8 their rights and benefits under the provisions of this
9 chapter.

10 "§31-6-14.

11 The county superintendent of education and the city
12 superintendent of schools in each respective county and city
13 ~~must shall~~ inform the teachers of their county and city of the
14 provisions and benefits of this chapter, who in turn shall
15 inform the children of veterans as to their rights and
16 benefits under ~~the provisions of~~ this chapter.

17 "§31-6-15.

18 "(a) The benefits provided in this chapter shall be
19 paid from an annual appropriation from the Education Trust
20 Fund to reimburse every ~~Alabama state institution of higher~~
21 ~~learning, college, university, or Alabama community or~~
22 ~~technical college~~ qualifying school in which benefits are
23 given to veterans, their ~~wives spouses~~, widows, or children
24 under this chapter. ~~Such reimbursement~~ Reimbursement shall be
25 made timely at the end of each academic quarter or semester
26 for all tuition reimbursements for the certified invoices
27 submitted by ~~such the~~ institution or school to the State

Department of Veterans' Affairs, and shall be supported by names of the students receiving such benefits, together with the amounts claimed for each student. Any amount of in-state tuition, books, or fees not paid by the combination of federal, state, and third party funds may be billed to students receiving such benefits or waived by the institution or school.

"(b) The Department of Examiners of Public Accounts may audit the records of any two-year or four-year institution of higher education which receives any reimbursement as a result of this chapter to the same extent, degree, and scope as audits performed on other public educational institutions, and the institution shall submit to the Legislature and the State Department of Veterans' Affairs each year, before any subsequent reimbursement may be applied for or considered, a full accounting of any receipts, disbursements, assets, liabilities, and other resources as of the date of the close of the immediately preceding academic year.

"§31-6-15.1.

"The State Department of Veterans Veterans' Affairs shall report to the Legislature, by January 1st of each year, the number of applicants approved in the previous fiscal year and those approved as of the reporting date for the current fiscal year, the number of students by years of remaining eligibility, and the costs of the previous fiscal year's expenditures to the program by each category of public institution of higher learning qualifying school to include

1 the number of students who attended each of those ~~institutions~~
2 schools.

3 "§31-6-16.

4 "Nothing in this chapter shall be construed as
5 lowering the standards or requirements, or as to making any
6 exceptions thereto for entrance into any of the ~~state~~
7 qualifying schools ~~or institutions~~ affected by this chapter.

8 All applicants, in order to obtain the educational benefits of
9 this chapter, must first meet all scholastic and other
10 requirements for entrance into any of the qualifying schools
11 coming within the purview of this chapter."

12 Section 2. Section 31-6-8, Code of Alabama 1975,
13 relating to Alabama G.I. Scholarships, is repealed.

14 Section 3. This act shall become effective on June
15 1, 2022, following its passage and approval by the Governor,
16 or its otherwise becoming law.