

A-Engrossed
House Bill 2201

Ordered by the House April 12
Including House Amendments dated April 12

Introduced and printed pursuant to House Rule 12.00. Pre-session filed (at the request of House Interim Committee on Veterans and Emergency Preparedness)

SUMMARY

The following summary is not prepared by the sponsors of the measure and is not a part of the body thereof subject to consideration by the Legislative Assembly. It is an editor's brief statement of the essential features of the measure.

[Directs Department of Veterans' Affairs to study and make recommendations regarding improvements to operations of department. Requires department to submit report on findings by January 1, 2021.]

Establishes Veteran Educational Bridge Grant Program within Department of Veterans' Affairs. Requires department to conduct outreach and provide grants to veterans enrolled in certain courses of study who are unable to complete degree program in expected completion period due to unavailability of courses.

Sunsets January 2, 2022.

A BILL FOR AN ACT

Relating to veterans; creating new provisions; and amending ORS 408.090.

Be It Enacted by the People of the State of Oregon:

SECTION 1. (1) The Veteran Educational Bridge Grant Program is established within the Department of Veterans' Affairs. Under the program, the department shall conduct outreach and provide grants to veterans who:

(a) Are pursuing and enrolled in an approved course of study in any program for which United States Department of Veterans Affairs education benefits may be used;

(b) Are eligible to receive federal financial assistance based on prior service in the Armed Forces of the United States; and

(c) Are unable to complete a degree program within the expected completion period because one or more required courses are not available until a later date.

(2) Grants under the program:

(a) May not exceed \$5,000 per veteran; and

(b) May be made only when there are sufficient moneys in the Veteran Educational Bridge Grant Program Fund established under section 2 of this 2019 Act to make the grants.

(3) The Department of Veterans' Affairs shall adopt rules for the implementation and operation of the program, including eligibility requirements for grant applicants.

(4) As used in this section, "veteran" has the meaning given that term in ORS 408.225 and includes disabled veterans, as defined in ORS 408.225.

SECTION 2. (1) The Veteran Educational Bridge Grant Program Fund is established in the State Treasury, separate and distinct from the General Fund. The moneys in the Veteran Educational Bridge Grant Program Fund are continuously appropriated to the Department of Veterans' Affairs for the purpose of making grants under the Veteran Educational Bridge

NOTE: Matter in **boldfaced** type in an amended section is new; matter *[italic and bracketed]* is existing law to be omitted. New sections are in **boldfaced** type.

1 **Grant Program established under section 1 of this 2019 Act and for the payment of actual**
2 **and necessary expenses incurred by the department in administering the fund and estab-**
3 **lishing and maintaining the program.**

4 **(2) The fund consists of:**

5 **(a) Moneys appropriated, allocated or deposited to the fund by the Legislative Assembly**
6 **or otherwise;**

7 **(b) Transfers of moneys to the fund from any source, including moneys transferred from**
8 **the Veterans' Educational Aid Account described in ORS 408.090; and**

9 **(c) Moneys from gifts, donations or any other source.**

10 **SECTION 3.** ORS 408.090 is amended to read:

11 408.090. (1) The Director of Veterans' Affairs, acting on behalf of the State of Oregon, is au-
12 thorized to accept any donation, gift, grant, bequest or devise made in furtherance of the purposes
13 of ORS 408.010 to 408.090 **and section 1 of this 2019 Act**[, and if]. **A donation, gift, grant, be-**
14 **quest or devise that is** made in cash or its equivalent or reduced thereto, shall be promptly paid
15 by the director to the State Treasurer, who shall credit the amount so received to the Veterans'
16 Educational Aid Account in the General Fund. The director shall make such disposition of do-
17 nations, gifts, grants, bequests or devises, not made in cash or its equivalent, as is specified by the
18 donor thereof, and their earnings and proceeds shall inure to said account. All such donations, gifts,
19 grants, bequests or devises accepted by the director are transfers exempt from taxes imposed on
20 inheritances under the laws of this state.

21 (2) All moneys in the Veterans' Educational Aid Account are continuously appropriated to the
22 director and may be used by the director for the purposes authorized in ORS 408.010 to 408.090 **and**
23 **section 1 of this 2019 Act.**

24 **SECTION 4.** There is allocated for the biennium beginning July 1, 2019, from the
25 **Veterans' Services Fund established under ORS 406.140, to the Department of Veterans' Af-**
26 **fairs, the amount of \$500,000 for deposit in the Veteran Educational Bridge Grant Program**
27 **Fund established under section 2 of this 2019 Act.**

28 **SECTION 5.** The Department of Veterans' Affairs shall prepare and submit a report to
29 **the interim committees of the Legislative Assembly related to veterans on or before Sep-**
30 **tember 15, 2020, regarding the status of the Veteran Educational Bridge Grant Program es-**
31 **tablished under section 1 of this 2019 Act.**

32 **SECTION 6.** (1) Sections 1 and 2 of this 2019 Act are repealed on January 2, 2022.

33 **(2) Any moneys remaining in the Veteran Educational Bridge Grant Program Fund es-**
34 **tablished under section 2 of this 2019 Act on January 2, 2022, shall be transferred to the**
35 **Veterans' Educational Aid Account established under ORS 408.090.**

36 **SECTION 7.** ORS 408.090, as amended by section 3 of this 2019 Act, is amended to read:

37 408.090. (1) The Director of Veterans' Affairs, acting on behalf of the State of Oregon, is au-
38 thorized to accept any donation, gift, grant, bequest or devise made in furtherance of the purposes
39 of ORS 408.010 to 408.090 [*and section 1 of this 2019 Act*]. A donation, gift, grant, bequest or devise
40 that is made in cash or its equivalent or reduced thereto, shall be promptly paid by the director to
41 the State Treasurer, who shall credit the amount so received to the Veterans' Educational Aid Ac-
42 count in the General Fund. The director shall make such disposition of donations, gifts, grants, be-
43 quests or devises, not made in cash or its equivalent, as is specified by the donor thereof, and their
44 earnings and proceeds shall inure to said account. All such donations, gifts, grants, bequests or de-
45 vises accepted by the director are transfers exempt from taxes imposed on inheritances under the

1 laws of this state.

2 (2) All moneys in the Veterans' Educational Aid Account are continuously appropriated to the
3 director and may be used by the director for the purposes authorized in ORS 408.010 to 408.090 [*and*
4 *section 1 of this 2019 Act*].

5 **SECTION 8. The amendments to ORS 408.090 by section 7 of this 2019 Act become oper-**
6 **ative on January 2, 2022.**

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