

HB 3920 STAFF MEASURE SUMMARY

Senate Committee On Veterans, Emergency Management, Federal and World Affairs

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Meeting Dates: 4/22, 4/29

WHAT THE MEASURE DOES:

The measure modifies the Veterans' Dependent Tuition Waiver, available for dependents of disabled or deceased service members and Purple Heart recipients. It raises the age by which a dependent child can apply for the waiver from 23 to 31, removes the requirement that qualified students apply for a master's degree within 12 months of receiving a baccalaureate degree to receive a tuition waiver for a master's degree, and allows an exemption to the age limit for anyone qualifying for the federal Survivors' and Dependents' Educational Assistance (DEA) program. The measure takes effect on the 91st day after adjournment sine die.

Fiscal impact: Indeterminate fiscal impact

Revenue impact: No revenue impact

HOUSE VOTE: Ayes, 50; Nays, 0

ISSUES DISCUSSED:

- Rationale for 31 as a cut off age
- Chapter 35 waiver available regardless of age

EFFECT OF AMENDMENT:

No amendment.

BACKGROUND:

The state of Oregon provides tuition waivers for specific student groups, including the children and spouses of military service members who are deceased, disabled, or Purple Heart recipients ([ORS 350.285](#)) and former foster children and former homeless youth ([ORS 350.300](#)). Dependents of deceased or disabled service members and Purple Heart recipients must be Oregon residents, and children must be 23 years old or younger, in order to be eligible. Tuition waivers are available only at Oregon public universities while earning both a baccalaureate degree and a master's degree.

Eligibility for the Oregon tuition waiver for dependents of deceased and disabled service members and Purple Heart recipients overlaps with eligibility for the federal [Survivors and Dependents Educational Assistance \(DEA\)](#) and the [Marine Gunnery Sergeant John David Fry Scholarship \(Fry Scholarship\)](#). ORS 350.285 allows students to collect DEA benefits without reducing their tuition waiver.

For the purposes of DEA eligibility, "child" is defined without regard to age or marital status (38 C.F.R. sect. 3.807). On December 28, 2022, in the Consolidated Appropriations Act of 2023 ([Public Law 117-328](#), pg. 1000), Congress explicitly permitted dependents of service members who qualify for DEA on or after August 1, 2023 to receive the benefit regardless of age.

House Bill 3920 raises the maximum eligible age for specified tuition waivers from 23 to 31 or for those eligible for the Survivors' and Dependents' Educational Assistance (DEA) program, and removes the 1-year time limit for eligible dependents to apply for a waiver for a master's degree after earning a bachelor's degree.