

# Senate Bill 668

Sponsored by Senator BONHAM (at the request of Senator Noah Robinson) (Pre-session filed.)

## 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 **as introduced**. The statement includes a measure digest written in compliance with applicable readability standards.

Digest: The Act allows Oregon veterans who are 80 percent disabled not to have to pay costs for certain college classes. The Act includes the spouse and child of those disabled veterans. The Act declares an emergency and becomes law when the Governor signs it. (Flesch Readability Score: 61.2).

Expands tuition benefits available to disabled veterans to permit veterans who are Oregon residents and are 80 percent or more disabled, and the spouse and child of disabled veterans, to have tuition waived for enrollment in a vocational program or an associate degree, baccalaureate degree or master's degree program at community colleges, public universities and the Oregon Health and Science University.

Prohibits the reduction of the amount of tuition that is waived by the amount of scholarships, grants or other aid a qualified student receives.

Declares an emergency, effective on passage.

## A BILL FOR AN ACT

1  
2 Relating to tuition benefits connected to disabled veterans; amending ORS 350.285; and declaring  
3 an emergency.

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

5 **SECTION 1.** ORS 350.285 is amended to read:

6 350.285. (1) As used in this section:

7 (a) "Child" means a child, adopted child or stepchild of either a service member or a Purple  
8 Heart recipient.

9 (b) "Eligible post-secondary institution" means:

10 (A) A public university listed in ORS 352.002;

11 **(B) A community college operated under ORS chapter 341; and**

12 *[(B)] (C) The Oregon Health and Science University.*

13 (c) "Purple Heart recipient" means a person, alive or deceased, who:

14 (A) Was relieved or discharged from service in the Armed Forces of the United States with ei-  
15 ther an honorable discharge or a general discharge under honorable conditions; and

16 (B) Was awarded the Purple Heart in 2001 or thereafter for wounds received in combat.

17 (d) "Qualified student" means a **service member or a** child, a spouse or an unremarried sur-  
18 viving spouse of a service member or a child of a Purple Heart recipient.

19 (e) "Service member" means a person who:

20 (A) As a member of the Armed Forces of the United States, died on active duty;

21 (B) As a member of the Armed Forces of the United States, died as a result of a military service  
22 connected disability; or

23 (C) Is *[100]* **80 percent or more** disabled as the result of a military service connected disability,  
24 as certified by the United States Department of Veterans Affairs or any branch of the Armed Forces  
25 of the United States.

**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 (2) Subject to subsections (3) to (7) of this section, an eligible post-secondary institution shall  
 2 waive tuition for a qualified student for courses **in a vocational program or** that may lead to **an**  
 3 **associate degree**, a baccalaureate degree or a master's degree. A qualified student [*who received*  
 4 *a tuition waiver for a baccalaureate degree may also qualify for a tuition waiver for a master's*  
 5 *degree*] **may qualify for tuition waivers for multiple programs or degrees under this section.**

6 (3)(a) The maximum waiver granted under this section shall be as follows:

7 (A) **For a vocational program, the total number of credit hours required to complete the**  
 8 **program.**

9 (B) **For an associate degree, the total number of credit hours that equals two years of**  
 10 **full-time attendance at an eligible post-secondary institution.**

11 (C) For a baccalaureate degree, the total number of credit hours that equals four years of full-  
 12 time attendance at an eligible post-secondary institution.

13 [(B)] (D) For a master's degree, the total number of credit hours that equals two years of full-  
 14 time attendance at an eligible post-secondary institution.

15 (b) Notwithstanding paragraph (a) of this subsection, a waiver may not exceed the total number  
 16 of credit hours the qualified student needs to graduate [*with*] **from a vocational program or with**  
 17 **an associate degree**, a baccalaureate degree or a master's degree.

18 (4) A waiver may be granted under this section only for credit hours for courses that are offered  
 19 by an eligible post-secondary institution and are available for enrollment.

20 (5) A qualified student may receive a waiver under this section if the student:

21 (a) At the time of application for a waiver, is considered a resident of this state for the purpose  
 22 of determining tuition to be paid at an eligible post-secondary institution; and

23 (b) Has been admitted to an eligible post-secondary institution for **a vocational program, an**  
 24 **associate degree program or** a baccalaureate degree program or has been admitted to a master's  
 25 degree program at an eligible post-secondary institution.

26 (6)(a) A child who applies for a waiver under this section must be 23 years of age or younger  
 27 at the time the child applies for a waiver.

28 (b) Notwithstanding paragraph (a) of this subsection, a child who is older than 23 years of age  
 29 is eligible for a waiver for a master's degree if the child:

30 (A) Applied for and received a waiver for a baccalaureate degree when the child was 23 years  
 31 of age or younger; and

32 (B) Applied for a waiver for a master's degree within 12 months of receiving a baccalaureate  
 33 degree.

34 (7)(a) The amount of tuition waived under this section may **not** be reduced by the amount of any  
 35 federal aid scholarships or grants, awards from the Oregon Opportunity Grant program established  
 36 under ORS 348.205, or any other aid from the eligible post-secondary institution, received by the  
 37 qualified student.

38 (b) The amount of tuition waived under this section may not be reduced by the amount of any  
 39 Survivors' and Dependents' Educational Assistance under 38 U.S.C. chapter 35 paid to a qualified  
 40 student.

41 **SECTION 2. This 2025 Act being necessary for the immediate preservation of the public**  
 42 **peace, health and safety, an emergency is declared to exist, and this 2025 Act takes effect**  
 43 **on its passage.**