



SOUTH CAROLINA REVENUE AND FISCAL AFFAIRS OFFICE
STATEMENT OF ESTIMATED FISCAL IMPACT
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Bill Number: H. 4404 Amended by House Education and Public Works on May 1, 2019
Author: Stringer
Subject: Veterans Nursing Degree Opportunity Act
Requestor: House Education and Public Works
RFA Analyst(s): A. Martin
Impact Date: May 3, 2019

Fiscal Impact Summary

This bill provides an accelerated pathway to a degree in nursing for military service members. This bill will have no expenditure impact on the Commission for Higher Education (CHE), the State Board for Technical and Comprehensive Education (SBTCE), the Department of Veterans' Affairs, or the Department of Labor, Licensing and Regulation (LLR). Each agency will handle the requirements of this bill using existing appropriations.

Because of the permissive nature of the bill, it is unknown which colleges, universities, and technical schools will choose to implement an accelerated degree program. In addition, the requirements for the accelerated degree programs are unknown. Therefore, the expenditure impact to institutions of higher learning is undetermined.

Explanation of Fiscal Impact

Amended by House Education and Public Works on May 1, 2019

State Expenditure

This bill creates the Veterans Nursing Degree Opportunity Act, which provides an accelerated pathway to a degree in nursing for military service members. This bill authorizes the development and implementation of Veteran Associate of Science in Nursing (VASN) and Veteran Bachelor of Science in Nursing (VBSN) degree programs. These programs will award academic and clinical credit, or waivers of credit, for relevant education, experience, and skills acquired during military service, thus enabling certain military clinical personnel to accelerate the degree process.

This bill requires a collaborative effort between CHE, the Board of Nursing, SBTCE, the South Carolina Nurses Association, and the Department of Veterans' Affairs to identify gaps between knowledge gained by military clinical personnel and the requirements for an associate's or bachelor's in nursing. The agencies must also approve curriculum that will enable military veterans to apply their experience and training toward degree requirements. In addition, the board must post information concerning the additional training requirements to their website. Institutions of higher learning will use this information should they choose to develop these accelerated degree programs.

Commission on Higher Education. This bill charges CHE with additional responsibilities that the agency is able to manage within existing appropriations. Therefore, this bill will have no

expenditure impact on CHE. Institutions of higher learning would have the option of building these accelerated programs. Because the requirements and the demand for these gap-bridging programs are unknown, the costs to the institutions cannot be estimated. In addition, the number of institutions choosing to implement these programs is unknown. Therefore, the expenditure impact to institutions is undetermined.

State Board for Technical and Comprehensive Education. This bill charges SBTCE with additional responsibilities that the agency is able to manage within existing appropriations. Therefore, this bill will have no expenditure impact on SBTCE. Technical colleges would have the option of building these accelerated programs. Because the requirements and the demand for these gap-bridging programs are unknown, the costs to the institutions cannot be estimated. In addition, the number of institutions choosing to implement these programs is unknown. Therefore, the expenditure impact to technical colleges is undetermined.

Department of Labor, Licensing and Regulation. This bill creates additional responsibilities for the Board of Nursing, which is under the regulation of LLR. LLR indicates that this bill will have a minimal impact on the board, and expects to manage the additional responsibilities using existing resources.

Department of Veterans' Affairs. This bill requires the Department of Veterans' Affairs to collaborate with other agencies in order to identify gaps between military education and training and the requirements for undergraduate nursing degrees. In addition, the department will work with other agencies to approve curriculum for accelerated nursing degree programs.

The Department of Veterans' Affairs is a newly created agency that will officially become active on July 1, 2019. Until then, the Division of Veterans' Affairs operates within the Department of Administration (Admin). Admin indicates that the provisions of this bill may be accomplished with the use of existing staff and resources. Therefore, this bill will have no expenditure impact on the Department of Veterans' Affairs.

State Revenue

N/A

Local Expenditure

N/A

Local Revenue

N/A

Introduced on April 4, 2019

State Expenditure

This bill creates the Veterans Nursing Degree Opportunity Act, which provides an accelerated pathway to a degree in nursing for military service members. This bill authorizes the development and implementation of Veteran Associate of Science in Nursing (VASN) and Veteran Bachelor of Science in Nursing (VBSN) degree programs. These programs will award academic and clinical credit, or waivers of credit, for relevant education, experience, and skills

acquired during military service, thus enabling certain military clinical personnel to accelerate the degree process.

This bill requires a collaborative effort between CHE, the Board of Nursing, SBTCE, and Admin to identify gaps between knowledge gained by military clinical personnel and the requirements for an associate's or bachelor's in nursing. The agencies must also approve curriculum that will enable military veterans to apply their experience and training toward degree requirements. In addition, the board must post information concerning the additional training requirements to their website. Institutions of higher learning will use this information should they choose to develop these accelerated degree programs.

Commission on Higher Education. This bill charges CHE with additional responsibilities that the agency is able to manage within existing appropriations. Therefore, this bill will have no expenditure impact on CHE. Institutions of higher learning would have the option of building these accelerated programs. Because the requirements and the demand for these gap-bridging programs are unknown, the costs to the institutions cannot be estimated. In addition, the number of institutions choosing to implement these programs is unknown. Therefore, the expenditure impact to institutions is undetermined.

State Board for Technical and Comprehensive Education. This bill charges SBTCE with additional responsibilities that the agency is able to manage within existing appropriations. Therefore, this bill will have no expenditure impact on SBTCE. Technical colleges would have the option of building these accelerated programs. Because the requirements and the demand for these gap-bridging programs are unknown, the costs to the institutions cannot be estimated. In addition, the number of institutions choosing to implement these programs is unknown. Therefore, the expenditure impact to technical colleges is undetermined.

Department of Labor, Licensing and Regulation. This bill creates additional responsibilities for the Board of Nursing, which is under the regulation of LLR. LLR indicates that this bill will have a minimal impact on the board, and expects to manage the additional responsibilities using existing resources.

Department of Administration. This bill requires the Division of Veterans' Affairs to collaborate with other agencies in order to identify gaps between military education and training and the requirements for undergraduate nursing degrees. In addition, the division will work with other agencies to approve curriculum for accelerated nursing degree programs. Admin indicates that this may be accomplished with the use of existing staff and resources. Therefore, this bill will have no expenditure impact on Admin.

State Revenue

N/A

Local Expenditure

N/A

Local Revenue

N/A

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "Frank A. Rainwater". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a prominent initial "F" and a stylized "R".

Frank A. Rainwater, Executive Director