

HB 2156 -- RETURNING HEROES' EDUCATION ACT

SPONSOR: Davis

COMMITTEE ACTION: Voted "Do Pass" by the Standing Committee on Veterans by a vote of 12 to 0. Voted "Do Pass" by the Select Committee on Social Services by a vote of 9 to 0.

This bill changes provisions of the Missouri Returning Heroes' Education Act that limit the amount of tuition all public institutions of higher education must charge a veteran. Currently, the tuition limitation must be provided after all other federal and state aid for which the veteran is eligible is applied and no combat veteran is permitted to receive more than the actual cost of attendance when the limitation is combined with other available aid. The bill changes the law to require the tuition limitation be provided before all other aid is applied and repeals the provisions prohibiting a veteran from receiving more than the actual cost of attendance when the limitation is combined with other available aid.

PROPONENTS: Supporters say that the bill implements the tuition reduction initially so the GI bill dollars will go further. The goal of the legislation is for veterans to not have student loan debt upon graduation from college. Each college applies the Returning Heroes' Education Act differently and this bill clarifies how the statutes should be applied. The bill will greatly support veterans in Missouri and allow them some breathing room as they obtain their degrees.

Testifying for the bill were Representative Davis; Pat Rowe Kerr; Shawn Mc Lafferty; Enk J. Anthes; Dewey Riehn; Logan Kinder; Phillip Bacon; David Emily; Office of the Adjutant General; Drew Matzes; and Clayton Boessen.

OPPONENTS: There was no opposition voiced to the committee.