



SENATE OF PENNSYLVANIA BILL SUMMARY

House Bill 824 Printer's No. 902

Prime Sponsor: Saylor
Committee: Veterans Affairs and Emergency Preparedness

SYNOPSIS:

Establishes the National Guard Youth Challenge Program

SUMMARY:

SB 52 would amend Title 51 (Military Affairs) by establishing a new Chapter 98 (National Guard Youth Challenge Program) as follows:

- Section 9801 (Definitions) would establish definitions for "Institution of Higher Education," "Program," and "School Entity."
- Section 9802 (Program) would require the Department of Military & Veterans Affairs to establish the Keystone State Challenge Program to the extent that funds are available and in accordance with the provisions of 32 U.S.C. §509 (National Guard Youth Challenge Program).
- Section 9803 (Program description) would require the program to seek to improve the life skills and employment potential of participants by providing military-based training and supervised work experience, together with the core program components of assisting participants to receive a high school diploma or its equivalent; leadership development; promoting fellowship and community service; developing life coping and job skills; and improving physical fitness, health and hygiene.
- Section 9804 (Length of Program) would require the program to be as set forth in 32 U.S.C. §509.
- Section 9805 (Participants) would require participation to be as set forth in 32 U.S.C. §509.
- Section 9806 (Administration) would require the program to be staffed by the administrative, professional, technical, and clerical employees necessary for the operation of the program.
- Section 9807 (Funding) would require the Department to apply for funding under 32 U.S.C. §509 and allow the Department to supplement with other resources.
- Section 9808 (Transferability of Course Credit) would require that all academic course credits earned by a program participant be recognized by any school entity in which the participant enrolls following completion of the program. In addition the Department, in consultation with the Department of Education, would be required to ensure that the program complies with all statutory and regulatory provisions as necessary to facilitate the transferability of course credit earned in the program to a school entity.
- Section 9809 (Advisory Council) would establish an Advisory Council consisting of the Adjutant General (non-voting member), the Deputy Adjutant General for Army (or designee), the Deputy Adjutant General for Air (or designee), the Secretary of Education (or designee), three members of the Senate appointed by the President Pro Tempore (two from the majority party and one from the minority), three members of the House appointed by the Speaker of the

House (two from the majority party and one from the minority). Members would serve for the duration of the term of their appointing authority and could be removed by the member's appointing authority for cause. Members would not receive any compensation but would receive reimbursement for necessary and proper expenses. The Council would be required to meet quarterly and at other times as called by the Chair; elect a Chair; and advise the Adjutant General and the Department on the operation of the Program. A quorum would be 5 members.

- Section 9810 (Report) would require the Department to submit an annual report to the majority and minority Chairs of the Senate and House Education Committees and majority and minority Chairs of the Senate and House Veterans Affairs & Emergency Preparedness Committees. The report shall include, but not be limited to:
 - The number of individuals who applied to the program in the previous fiscal year;
 - The number of individuals who participated in the program in the previous fiscal year;
 - The number and percentage of program participants in the previous fiscal year who earned a high school diploma or its equivalent, enrolled in a course of study at an institution of higher education, accepted a position of full-time, paid employment, accepted a position of part-time, paid employment, or entered the armed forces of the United States, including a reserve component or the National Guard;
 - The demographic makeup of the applicants and participants in, the program, including, but not limited to, race, age, and gender; and
 - Any information the Department provides to the Secretary of Defense under 32 U.S.C. § 509.
- Section 9811 (Audit) would require the Department to annually obtain an audit from a certified public accountant and submit it to the majority and minority Chairs of the Senate and House Veterans Affairs & Emergency Preparedness Committees

Effective Date: Immediately.

BILL HISTORY:

HB 824 was unanimously passed by the House. Similar legislation was introduced in the Senate in prior sessions - 2015-16 (SB 56), 2013-14 (SB 179), 2011-12 (SB 77), 2009-10 (SB 518), and 2007-08 (SB 1271). The Senate Veterans Affairs and Emergency Preparedness Committee held a hearing and unanimously reported SB 56 last session, but it was not taken up by the full Senate. The House also passed HB 1689 in 2015-16.

Prepared by: N. Silcox 7/7/2017