

130th MAINE LEGISLATURE

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S.P. 269	In Senate, March 5, 2021

An Act To Help Veterans Access Jobs, Education and Housing

Reference to the Committee on Veterans and Legal Affairs suggested and ordered printed.

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DAREK M. GRANT Secretary of the Senate

Presented by Senator RAFFERTY of York.

- 1 Be it enacted by the People of the State of Maine as follows: PART A 2 3 Sec. A-1. 10 MRSA §8003, sub-§2-A, ¶M, as enacted by PL 2017, c. 173, §2, is amended to read: 4 5 M. To exercise discretionary authority, after consultation with licensing boards if 6 applicable, to review and determine on a case-by-case basis, in consultation with any applicable licensing board, examination and licensing eligibility for applications for 7 8 licensure submitted by individuals who identify themselves as veterans with military 9 service, experience and training; and Sec. A-2. 10 MRSA §8003, sub-§2-A, ¶N, as enacted by PL 2017, c. 173, §2, is 10 amended to read: 11 N. To exercise discretionary authority to waive examination fees and license fees for 12 applicants for licensure who identify themselves as are veterans with military service, 13 14 experience and training. 15 Sec. A-3. 10 MRSA §8011, as enacted by PL 2013, c. 424, Pt. D, §2 and affected 16 by §3, is amended to read: 17 §8011. Veterans and military spouses 18 By January 1, 2014, each board, commission, office and agency within the department 19 listed in section 8001 or affiliated with the department under section 8001-A shall adopt a 20 process to facilitate qualified returning military veterans and qualified spouses of returning military veterans or of active duty service members to qualify for professional licenses 21 22 granted by those boards, commissions, offices and agencies in an expeditious manner. For 23 the purposes of this section, "returning military veteran" means a veteran of the Armed 24 Forces of the United States who has been honorably discharged from active duty with an honorable discharge or a general discharge under honorable conditions. Notwithstanding 25 any other provision of law to the contrary, the Director of the Office of Professional and 26 27 Occupational Regulation and each licensing board within or affiliated with the department 28 shall, upon presentation of satisfactory evidence by an applicant for professional or 29 occupational licensure, accept education, training or service completed by the applicant as a member of the Armed Forces of the United States or Reserves of the United States Armed 30 Forces, the national guard of any state, the military reserves of any state or the naval militia 31 32 of any state toward the qualifications to receive the license. 33 1. Endorsement. The board, commission, office or agency may shall permit a 34 returning military veteran or a spouse of a returning military veteran or of an active duty service member who holds a comparable license in another state to acquire a license by 35 36 endorsement in this State for the remainder of the term of the license from the other state
- **2. Temporary license.** The board, commission, office or agency may shall permit a returning military veteran or a spouse of a returning military veteran or of an active duty service member who holds a comparable license in another state to obtain a temporary license in this State for a period of time necessary to obtain a license in this State.

or until a license is obtained in this State.

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3. Acceptance of military credentials. The board, commission, office or agency shall
 permit a returning military veteran who applies for a license less than 2 years after being
 discharged from active duty and whose military training qualifies and experience qualify
 the veteran for a license in a profession or occupation that requires a license in this State to
 acquire a temporary license until a license is issued.

6 **4. Continuing education requirements.** The board, commission, office or agency 7 may allow a full or partial exemption from continuing education requirements for a 8 returning military veteran or the spouse of a returning military veteran or of an active duty 9 service member. Evidence of completion of continuing education requirements may be 10 required for a subsequent license or renewal. A board, commission, office or agency shall 11 provide that continuing education requirements may be met by comparable military 12 training.

13 Sec. A-4. 32 MRSA §88, sub-§2, ¶I, as enacted by PL 1991, c. 588, §16, is
 14 amended to read:

15 I. The board may establish and collect licensure fees, application fees, examination 16 fees, course and conference fees, tuition and other charges as determined necessary by the board for the efficient administration of this chapter. The board may waive 17 18 examination fees and license fees for applicants for licensure as emergency medical services persons those persons who are veterans with military service, experience and 19 20 training. All funds received pursuant to this paragraph must be deposited into a 21 nonlapsing fund established for the purpose. Maine Emergency Medical Services shall administer the fund with the advice and consent of the commissioner. Funds must be 22 23 deposited with the Treasurer of State to the credit of the fund and may be invested as 24 provided by law. Interest on these investments must be credited to the fund.

Sec. A-5. 32 MRSA §9407, sub-§1, as amended by PL 1983, c. 221, §3, is further
 amended to read:

27 1. Application; fee. Applications for original licenses shall must be made to the commissioner on forms prescribed by him the commissioner with respect to the 28 29 requirements of section 9405. The fee for a license application is \$400, of which \$100 must be submitted with the application and \$300 must be submitted upon issuance of the license. 30 31 If the previously issued license has expired and has not been renewed within a period of 60 days, the application shall must be considered the original application and the same fees 32 and all requirements of an original application shall apply. The commissioner may waive 33 34 the license fees for applicants for original licensure who are veterans with military service, 35 experience and training.

36 PART B
37 Sec. B-1. 20-A MRSA §10010, as amended by PL 2013, c. 311, §2 and repealed
38 and replaced by c. 488, §1, is further amended to read:

39 §10010. Current members and veterans of the United States Armed Forces

40If a current member of the United States Armed Forces or a veteran of the United States41Armed Forces who has been honorably discharged from active duty with an honorable42discharge or a general discharge under honorable conditions is enrolled in a program of43education at any campus of the University of Maine System, the Maine Community

1 2	College System or the Maine Maritime Academy, that member or veteran is eligible for in- state tuition rates, regardless of the member's or veteran's state of residence.
3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 11 12 13 14 15 16 17	The Maine Maritime Academy, the University of Maine System and the Maine Community College System shall designate liaisons to provide benefits assistance to enrolled and prospective students who are members of the United States Armed Forces or veterans of the United States Armed Forces who have been discharged from active duty with an honorable discharge or a general discharge under honorable conditions. The Maine Maritime Academy shall designate at least one liaison, the University of Maine System shall designate at least one liaison at each of its universities and the Maine Community College System shall designate at least one liaison at each of its colleges. To the extent space is available, the Maine Maritime Academy, the University of Maine System and the Maine Community College System shall designate a specific location at each institution, equipped with at least one computer with Internet access, where enrolled students who are members of the United States Armed Forces and veterans of the United States Armed Forces who have been discharged from active duty with an honorable discharge or a general discharge under honorable conditions may congregate to study, to provide support to their peers and to receive assistance from the designated liaison.
18	PART C
19 20	Sec. C-1. 34-B MRSA §3011, as corrected by RR 2017, c. 1, §31, is amended by adding at the end a new paragraph to read:
21 22 23 24	In coordination with the Director of the Maine Bureau of Veterans' Services within the Department of Defense, Veterans and Emergency Management, the department shall develop a method for identifying eligible veterans who are homeless and for assisting those persons with receiving assistance under this section.
25	SUMMARY
26	Part A of this bill helps veterans access jobs in the following ways.
27 28 29 30 31 32	1. It requires the Director of the Office of Professional and Occupational Regulation within the Department of Professional and Financial Regulation to review the examination and licensing eligibility of applicants for licensure who are veterans with military service, experience and training and to waive any applicable examination and licensing fees for those veterans. Under current law, the director has discretion to conduct these reviews and to grant these fee waivers for individuals who self-identify as veterans.
33 34 35 36 37 38	2. It requires each professional licensing board within or affiliated with the department to grant a license by endorsement or a temporary license to a person who holds a comparable license in another state and who is a returning military veteran, the qualified spouse of a returning military veteran or the qualified spouse of an active duty service member. Under current law, these professional licensing boards may, but are not required to, provide licensure by endorsement or temporary licenses in these circumstances.
39 40 41 42	3. It requires each professional licensing board within or affiliated with the department to permit a returning military veteran who applies for a license less than 2 years after being discharged from active duty and whose military training and experience qualify the veteran for a license in this State to acquire a temporary license until the full license is issued.

4. It clarifies that a returning military veteran who is eligible for professional and cocupational licensing assistance is a veteran of the Armed Forces of the United States who was discharged from active duty with either an honorable discharge or a general discharge under honorable conditions.

5. It authorizes the Department of Public Safety, Emergency Medical Services' Board 6 to waive examination and initial licensing fees for a veteran with military service, 7 experience and training who is an applicant for licensure as an emergency medical services 8 person.

6. It authorizes the Commissioner of Public Safety to waive initial licensing fees for a
veteran with military service, experience and training who is an applicant for licensure as
a private security guard.

Part B helps veterans access postsecondary education in the State by requiring the University of Maine System, the Maine Community College System and the Maine Maritime Academy to each designate liaisons to provide academic counseling and benefits assistance to students who are members of the United States Armed Forces or who are veterans of the United States Armed Forces and to designate a specific location at each university or college where those students may congregate to study, to provide support to their peers and to receive assistance from the liaison.

Part C helps veterans access housing by requiring the Department of Health and Human
 Services, in coordination with the Director of the Maine Bureau of Veterans' Services
 within the Department of Defense, Veterans and Emergency Management, to develop a
 method of identifying veterans who are homeless and eligible for temporary housing
 assistance under the Bridging Rental Assistance Program.