



**GOVERNOR'S PRESS RELEASE ON SIGNING:**

Yes

**FOLLOWING WERE PRINTED:**

To check for circulating copies, contact New Jersey State Government Publications at the State Library (609) 278-2640 ext.103 or <mailto:refdesk@njstatelib.org>

**REPORTS:**

No

**HEARINGS:**

No

**NEWSPAPER ARTICLES:**

No

RH/CL

P.L. 2021176, CHAPTER 176, *approved July 22, 2021*  
Senate No., 961 (*First Reprint*)

1 AN ACT establishing a Troops to College Grant Program and  
2 amending P.L.2009, c.125.

3  
4 **BE IT ENACTED** by the Senate and General Assembly of the State  
5 of New Jersey:

6  
7 1. Section 2 of P.L.2009, c.125 (C.18A:3B-42) is amended to  
8 read as follows:

9 2. a. The **【New Jersey Commission on】** Secretary of Higher  
10 Education, in consultation with the Department of Military and  
11 Veterans' Affairs, shall establish the Troops to College Program.  
12 The purpose of the program shall be to assist New Jersey's  
13 <sup>1</sup>**【public】** institutions of higher education in coordinating the  
14 provision of a comprehensive array of services to assist veterans in  
15 making the transition into the college classroom. The services may  
16 include, but need not be limited to, assistance in applying for State  
17 and federal student financial aid, counseling resources, a campus  
18 veterans' assistance officer to provide a single point of contact for  
19 information on the institution's benefits and programs for veterans,  
20 and an online resource to consolidate pertinent information  
21 specifically for veterans attending that institution.

22 b. The **【commission】** secretary in implementing the Troops to  
23 College Program shall include on its Internet site information to  
24 assist veterans in accessing the higher education opportunities that  
25 exist in the State. The information shall include, but need not be  
26 limited to:

27 (1) contact information for the campus veterans' assistance  
28 officer at each of the <sup>1</sup>**【public】** institutions of higher education;  
29 and

30 (2) information on the array of programs and services available  
31 to veterans at each of the <sup>1</sup>**【public】** institutions of higher  
32 education.

33 c. The secretary, in consultation with the department, shall  
34 establish a Troops to College Grant Program. Under the program,  
35 the secretary shall annually select up to three <sup>1</sup>**【public】** institutions  
36 of higher education to receive a \$150,000 Troops to College grant.  
37 In order to receive a grant, an institution shall demonstrate that it is  
38 providing a comprehensive array of services, benefits, and programs  
39 for veterans attending the institution. In awarding a grant to an  
40 institution, the secretary shall consider the following factors:

**EXPLANATION** – Matter enclosed in bold-faced brackets **【thus】** in the above bill is not enacted and is intended to be omitted in the law.

Matter underlined thus is new matter.

Matter enclosed in superscript numerals has been adopted as follows:

<sup>1</sup>Senate floor amendments adopted February 10, 2020.

- 1       (1) the total number of <sup>1</sup>self-reporting<sup>1</sup> veterans enrolled in the  
2 institution;  
3       (2) the existence of a veterans' affairs office at the institution  
4 and the number of staff assigned to the office;  
5       (3) whether the institution has entered into the Department of  
6 Defense Voluntary Education Partnership Memorandum of  
7 Understanding;  
8       (4) whether the institution's tuition and fees are at or below the  
9 minimum limits established by the "Post-9/11 Veterans Educational  
10 Assistance Act of 2008," Pub.L.110-252 (38 U.S.C. s.3301 et seq.);  
11       (5) whether the institution participates in the Yellow Ribbon  
12 Program of the "Post-9/11 Veterans Educational Assistance Act of  
13 2008," Pub.L.110-252 (38 U.S.C. s.3301 et seq.);  
14       (6) whether the institution waives its application fee and offers  
15 priority registration to veterans;  
16       (7) the level of academic and staff support provided to veterans  
17 enrolled in the institution;  
18       (8) the number and type of extracurricular activities designed  
19 for and offered to veterans enrolled in the institution;  
20       (9) the amount of institutional funds allocated to support  
21 veterans enrolled in the institution, including the number of  
22 scholarships offered to veteran students;  
23       (10) whether the institution offers veteran housing or provides  
24 an area on campus where veteran students may meet and discuss  
25 issues of common interest;  
26       (11) the course completion rate of <sup>1</sup>self-reporting<sup>1</sup> veterans  
27 enrolled in the institution;  
28       (12) the institution's retention and graduation rates for <sup>1</sup>self-  
29 reporting<sup>1</sup> veterans enrolled in the institution;  
30       (13) the student loan default rate for <sup>1</sup>self-reporting<sup>1</sup> veterans  
31 enrolled in the institution; and  
32       (14) the employment and salary status of <sup>1</sup>self-reporting<sup>1</sup>  
33 veterans six years following graduation from the institution.  
34 (cf: P.L.2009, c.125, s.2)

35  
36       2. This act shall take effect in the first full academic year  
37 following enactment.  
38  
39  
40

41  
42       Establishes annual grant program to recognize institutions of  
43 higher education that offer comprehensive array of veteran  
44 programs and services.

## CHAPTER 176

AN ACT establishing a Troops to College Grant Program and amending P.L.2009, c.125.

**BE IT ENACTED** by the Senate and General Assembly of the State of New Jersey:

1. Section 2 of P.L.2009, c.125 (C.18A:3B-42) is amended to read as follows:

C.18A:3B-42 Troops to College Grant Program.

2. a. The Secretary of Higher Education, in consultation with the Department of Military and Veterans' Affairs, shall establish the Troops to College Program. The purpose of the program shall be to assist New Jersey's institutions of higher education in coordinating the provision of a comprehensive array of services to assist veterans in making the transition into the college classroom. The services may include, but need not be limited to, assistance in applying for State and federal student financial aid, counseling resources, a campus veterans' assistance officer to provide a single point of contact for information on the institution's benefits and programs for veterans, and an online resource to consolidate pertinent information specifically for veterans attending that institution.

b. The secretary in implementing the Troops to College Program shall include on its Internet site information to assist veterans in accessing the higher education opportunities that exist in the State. The information shall include, but need not be limited to:

(1) contact information for the campus veterans' assistance officer at each of the institutions of higher education; and

(2) information on the array of programs and services available to veterans at each of the institutions of higher education.

c. The secretary, in consultation with the department, shall establish a Troops to College Grant Program. Under the program, the secretary shall annually select up to three institutions of higher education to receive a \$150,000 Troops to College grant. In order to receive a grant, an institution shall demonstrate that it is providing a comprehensive array of services, benefits, and programs for veterans attending the institution. In awarding a grant to an institution, the secretary shall consider the following factors:

(1) the total number of self-reporting veterans enrolled in the institution;

(2) the existence of a veterans' affairs office at the institution and the number of staff assigned to the office;

(3) whether the institution has entered into the Department of Defense Voluntary Education Partnership Memorandum of Understanding;

(4) whether the institution's tuition and fees are at or below the minimum limits established by the "Post-9/11 Veterans Educational Assistance Act of 2008," Pub.L.110-252 (38 U.S.C. s.3301 et seq.);

(5) whether the institution participates in the Yellow Ribbon Program of the "Post-9/11 Veterans Educational Assistance Act of 2008," Pub.L.110-252 (38 U.S.C. s.3301 et seq.);

(6) whether the institution waives its application fee and offers priority registration to veterans;

(7) the level of academic and staff support provided to veterans enrolled in the institution;

(8) the number and type of extracurricular activities designed for and offered to veterans enrolled in the institution;

(9) the amount of institutional funds allocated to support veterans enrolled in the institution, including the number of scholarships offered to veteran students;

(10) whether the institution offers veteran housing or provides an area on campus where veteran students may meet and discuss issues of common interest;

(11) the course completion rate of self-reporting veterans enrolled in the institution;

(12) the institution's retention and graduation rates for self-reporting veterans enrolled in the institution;

(13) the student loan default rate for self-reporting veterans enrolled in the institution; and

(14) the employment and salary status of self-reporting veterans six years following graduation from the institution.

2. This act shall take effect in the first full academic year following enactment.

Approved July 22, 2021.

# SENATE, No. 961

## STATE OF NEW JERSEY 219th LEGISLATURE

INTRODUCED JANUARY 27, 2020

**Sponsored by:**

**Senator TROY SINGLETON**

**District 7 (Burlington)**

**Senator NILSA CRUZ-PEREZ**

**District 5 (Camden and Gloucester)**

**Co-Sponsored by:**

**Senators Brown and Greenstein**

**SYNOPSIS**

Establishes annual grant program to recognize public institutions of higher education that offer comprehensive array of veteran programs and services.

**CURRENT VERSION OF TEXT**

As introduced.



**(Sponsorship Updated As Of: 2/10/2020)**

1 AN ACT establishing a Troops to College Grant Program and  
2 amending P.L.2009, c.125.

3

4 **BE IT ENACTED** by the Senate and General Assembly of the State  
5 of New Jersey:

6

7 1. Section 2 of P.L.2009, c.125 (C.18A:3B-42) is amended to  
8 read as follows:

9 2. a. The **【New Jersey Commission on】** Secretary of Higher  
10 Education, in consultation with the Department of Military and  
11 Veterans' Affairs, shall establish the Troops to College Program.  
12 The purpose of the program shall be to assist New Jersey's public  
13 institutions of higher education in coordinating the provision of a  
14 comprehensive array of services to assist veterans in making the  
15 transition into the college classroom. The services may include, but  
16 need not be limited to, assistance in applying for State and federal  
17 student financial aid, counseling resources, a campus veterans'  
18 assistance officer to provide a single point of contact for  
19 information on the institution's benefits and programs for veterans,  
20 and an online resource to consolidate pertinent information  
21 specifically for veterans attending that institution.

22 b. The **【commission】** secretary in implementing the Troops to  
23 College Program shall include on its Internet site information to  
24 assist veterans in accessing the higher education opportunities that  
25 exist in the State. The information shall include, but need not be  
26 limited to:

27 (1) contact information for the campus veterans' assistance  
28 officer at each of the public institutions of higher education; and

29 (2) information on the array of programs and services available  
30 to veterans at each of the public institutions of higher education.

31 c. The secretary, in consultation with the department, shall  
32 establish a Troops to College Grant Program. Under the program,  
33 the secretary shall annually select up to three public institutions of  
34 higher education to receive a \$150,000 Troops to College grant. In  
35 order to receive a grant, an institution shall demonstrate that it is  
36 providing a comprehensive array of services, benefits, and programs  
37 for veterans attending the institution. In awarding a grant to an  
38 institution, the secretary shall consider the following factors:

39 (1) the total number of veterans enrolled in the institution;

40 (2) the existence of a veterans' affairs office at the institution  
41 and the number of staff assigned to the office;

42 (3) whether the institution has entered into the Department of  
43 Defense Voluntary Education Partnership Memorandum of  
44 Understanding;

45 (4) whether the institution's tuition and fees are at or below the  
46 minimum limits established by the "Post-9/11 Veterans Educational  
47 Assistance Act of 2008," Pub.L110-252 (38 U.S.C. s.3301 et seq.);

**EXPLANATION** – Matter enclosed in bold-faced brackets **【thus】** in the above bill is not enacted and is intended to be omitted in the law.

Matter underlined thus is new matter.



**S961 SINGLETON, CRUZ-PEREZ**

4

1 veterans' affairs office at the institution and the number of staff  
2 assigned to the office; whether the institution participates in the  
3 Yellow Ribbon Program of the "Post-9/11 Veterans Educational  
4 Assistance Act of 2008"; the amount of institutional funds allocated  
5 to support veterans enrolled in the institution, including the number  
6 of scholarships offered to veteran students; whether the institution  
7 offers veteran housing or provides an area on campus where veteran  
8 students may meet and discuss issues of common interest; the  
9 institution's retention and graduation rates for veterans enrolled in  
10 the institution; and the employment and salary status of veterans six  
11 years following graduation from the institution.

# ASSEMBLY HIGHER EDUCATION COMMITTEE

## STATEMENT TO

[First Reprint]

**SENATE, No. 961**

# **STATE OF NEW JERSEY**

DATED: MAY 5, 2021

The Assembly Higher Education Committee reports favorably Senate Bill No. 961 (1R).

This bill establishes an annual grant program under the State's Troops to College Program which was established in 2009 to assist New Jersey's public institutions of higher education in coordinating the provision of a comprehensive array of services to assist veterans in making the transition into the college classroom. This bill will recognize and support those efforts through the establishment of an annual grant program that will be available to both public and independent institutions of higher education.

Under the bill, the program will be developed by the Secretary of Higher Education, in consultation with the Department of Military and Veterans' Affairs. Under the program, the secretary will annually select up to three institutions of higher education to receive a \$150,000 Troops to College grant. In order to receive a grant, an institution must demonstrate that it is offering a comprehensive array of services, benefits, and programs for veterans attending the institution.

The bill outlines a number of factors that the secretary will consider in awarding the grants that include among others: the total number of self-reporting veterans enrolled in the institution; the existence of a veterans' affairs office at the institution and the number of staff assigned to the office; whether the institution participates in the Yellow Ribbon Program of the "Post-9/11 Veterans Educational Assistance Act of 2008"; the amount of institutional funds allocated to support veterans enrolled in the institution, including the number of scholarships offered to veteran students; whether the institution offers veteran housing or provides an area on campus where veteran students may meet and discuss issues of common interest; the institution's retention and graduation rates for self-reporting veterans enrolled in the institution; and the employment and salary status of self-reporting veterans six years following graduation from the institution.

As reported by the committee, this bill is identical to Assembly Bill No. 3805, which was also reported by the committee on this same date.

# SENATE HIGHER EDUCATION COMMITTEE

## STATEMENT TO

### SENATE, No. 961

# STATE OF NEW JERSEY

DATED: JANUARY 30, 2020

The Senate Higher Education Committee reports favorably Senate Bill No. 961.

This bill establishes an annual grant program under the State's Troops to College Program which was established in 2009 to assist New Jersey's public institutions of higher education in coordinating the provision of a comprehensive array of services to assist veterans in making the transition into the college classroom. This bill will recognize and support those efforts through the establishment of an annual grant program. The program will be developed by the Secretary of Higher Education, in consultation with the Department of Military and Veterans' Affairs. Under the program, the secretary will annually select up to three public institutions of higher education to receive a \$150,000 Troops to College grant. In order to receive a grant, an institution must demonstrate that it is offering a comprehensive array of services, benefits, and programs for veterans attending the institution.

The bill outlines a number of factors that the secretary will consider in awarding the grants that include among others: the total number of veterans enrolled in the institution; the existence of a veterans' affairs office at the institution and the number of staff assigned to the office; whether the institution participates in the Yellow Ribbon Program of the "Post-9/11 Veterans Educational Assistance Act of 2008"; the amount of institutional funds allocated to support veterans enrolled in the institution, including the number of scholarships offered to veteran students; whether the institution offers veteran housing or provides an area on campus where veteran students may meet and discuss issues of common interest; the institution's retention and graduation rates for veterans enrolled in the institution; and the employment and salary status of veterans six years following graduation from the institution.

STATEMENT TO  
**SENATE, No. 961**

with Senate Floor Amendments  
(Proposed by Senator SINGLETON)

ADOPTED: FEBRUARY 10, 2020

These Senate amendments eliminate the restriction that grants could only be awarded to public institutions of higher education. The amendments also provide that the data on veterans required to be reported under the bill will be for veterans who self-report. The amendments also extend the Troops to College Program to independent institutions of higher education.

# ASSEMBLY, No. 3805

## STATE OF NEW JERSEY 219th LEGISLATURE

INTRODUCED MARCH 16, 2020

**Sponsored by:**

**Assemblyman JOHN ARMATO**

**District 2 (Atlantic)**

**Assemblyman ANDREW ZWICKER**

**District 16 (Hunterdon, Mercer, Middlesex and Somerset)**

**Assemblyman ANTHONY S. VERRELLI**

**District 15 (Hunterdon and Mercer)**

**Co-Sponsored by:**

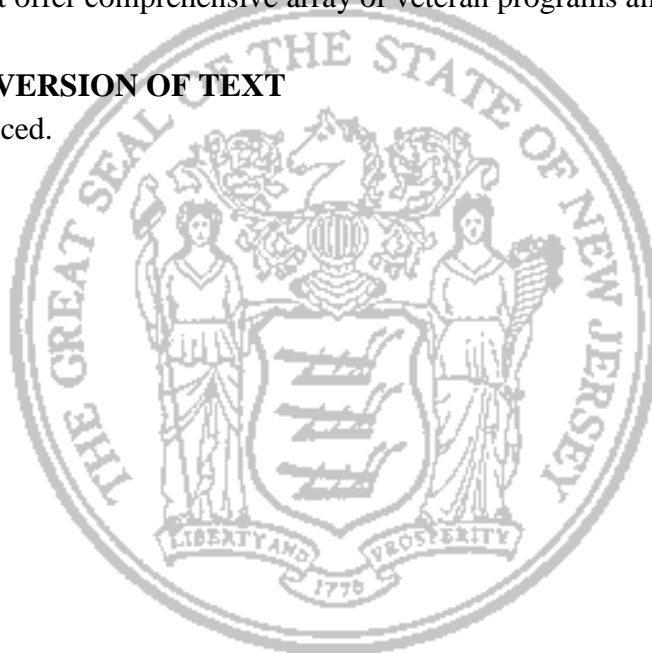
**Assemblywoman Murphy, Assemblyman DeAngelo, Assemblywoman Reynolds-Jackson, Assemblymen Benson, Scharfenberger, Moen, Space, Wirths, Johnson, Freiman, Assemblywomen Vainieri Huttle, Swain and Timberlake**

**SYNOPSIS**

Establishes annual grant program to recognize institutions of higher education that offer comprehensive array of veteran programs and services.

**CURRENT VERSION OF TEXT**

As introduced.



**(Sponsorship Updated As Of: 5/20/2021)**

1 AN ACT establishing a Troops to College Grant Program and  
2 amending P.L.2009, c.125.

3

4 **BE IT ENACTED** by the Senate and General Assembly of the State  
5 of New Jersey:

6

7 1. Section 2 of P.L.2009, c.125 (C.18A:3B-42) is amended to  
8 read as follows:

9 2. a. The **【New Jersey Commission on】** Secretary of Higher  
10 Education, in consultation with the Department of Military and  
11 Veterans' Affairs, shall establish the Troops to College Program.  
12 The purpose of the program shall be to assist New Jersey's **【public】**  
13 institutions of higher education in coordinating the provision of a  
14 comprehensive array of services to assist veterans in making the  
15 transition into the college classroom. The services may include, but  
16 need not be limited to, assistance in applying for State and federal  
17 student financial aid, counseling resources, a campus veterans'  
18 assistance officer to provide a single point of contact for  
19 information on the institution's benefits and programs for veterans,  
20 and an online resource to consolidate pertinent information  
21 specifically for veterans attending that institution.

22 b. The **【commission】** secretary in implementing the Troops to  
23 College Program shall include on its Internet site information to  
24 assist veterans in accessing the higher education opportunities that  
25 exist in the State. The information shall include, but need not be  
26 limited to:

27 (1) contact information for the campus veterans' assistance  
28 officer at each of the **【public】** institutions of higher education; and

29 (2) information on the array of programs and services available  
30 to veterans at each of the **【public】** institutions of higher education.

31 c. The secretary, in consultation with the department, shall  
32 establish a Troops to College Grant Program. Under the program,  
33 the secretary shall annually select up to three institutions of higher  
34 education to receive a \$150,000 Troops to College grant. In order  
35 to receive a grant, an institution shall demonstrate that it is  
36 providing a comprehensive array of services, benefits, and programs  
37 for veterans attending the institution. In awarding a grant to an  
38 institution, the secretary shall consider the following factors:

39 (1) the total number of self-reporting veterans enrolled in the  
40 institution;

41 (2) the existence of a veterans' affairs office at the institution  
42 and the number of staff assigned to the office;

43 (3) whether the institution has entered into the Department of  
44 Defense Voluntary Education Partnership Memorandum of  
45 Understanding;

EXPLANATION – Matter enclosed in bold-faced brackets **【thus】** in the above bill is  
not enacted and is intended to be omitted in the law.

Matter underlined thus is new matter.

1       (4) whether the institution’s tuition and fees are at or below the  
2 minimum limits established by the “Post-9/11 Veterans Educational  
3 Assistance Act of 2008,” Pub.L.110-252 (38 U.S.C. s.3301 et seq.);

4       (5) whether the institution participates in the Yellow Ribbon  
5 Program of the “Post-9/11 Veterans Educational Assistance Act of  
6 2008,” Pub.L.110-252 (38 U.S.C. s.3301 et seq.);

7       (6) whether the institution waives its application fee and offers  
8 priority registration to veterans;

9       (7) the level of academic and staff support provided to veterans  
10 enrolled in the institution;

11       (8) the number and type of extracurricular activities designed  
12 for and offered to veterans enrolled in the institution;

13       (9) the amount of institutional funds allocated to support  
14 veterans enrolled in the institution, including the number of  
15 scholarships offered to veteran students;

16       (10) whether the institution offers veteran housing or provides  
17 an area on campus where veteran students may meet and discuss  
18 issues of common interest;

19       (11) the course completion rate of self-reporting veterans  
20 enrolled in the institution;

21       (12) the institution’s retention and graduation rates for self-  
22 reporting veterans enrolled in the institution;

23       (13) the student loan default rate for self-reporting veterans  
24 enrolled in the institution; and

25       (14) the employment and salary status of self-reporting veterans  
26 six years following graduation from the institution.

27 (cf: P.L.2009, c.125, s.2)

28  
29       2. This act shall take effect in the first full academic year  
30 following enactment.

### 31 32 33 STATEMENT

34  
35       This bill establishes an annual grant program under the State’s  
36 Troops to College Program which was established in 2009 to assist  
37 New Jersey’s public institutions of higher education in coordinating  
38 the provision of a comprehensive array of services to assist veterans  
39 in making the transition into the college classroom. This bill will  
40 recognize and support those efforts through the establishment of an  
41 annual grant program that will be available to both public and  
42 independent institutions of higher education

43       \Under the bill, the program will be developed by the Secretary  
44 of Higher Education, in consultation with the Department of  
45 Military and Veterans’ Affairs. Under the program, the secretary  
46 will annually select up to three institutions of higher education to  
47 receive a \$150,000 Troops to College grant. In order to receive a  
48 grant, an institution must demonstrate that it is offering a

1 comprehensive array of services, benefits, and programs for  
2 veterans attending the institution.

3 The bill outlines a number of factors that the secretary will  
4 consider in awarding the grants that include among others: the total  
5 number of self-reporting veterans enrolled in the institution; the  
6 existence of a veterans' affairs office at the institution and the  
7 number of staff assigned to the office; whether the institution  
8 participates in the Yellow Ribbon Program of the "Post-9/11  
9 Veterans Educational Assistance Act of 2008"; the amount of  
10 institutional funds allocated to support veterans enrolled in the  
11 institution, including the number of scholarships offered to veteran  
12 students; whether the institution offers veteran housing or provides  
13 an area on campus where veteran students may meet and discuss  
14 issues of common interest; the institution's retention and graduation  
15 rates for self-reporting veterans enrolled in the institution; and the  
16 employment and salary status of self-reporting veterans six years  
17 following graduation from the institution.

# ASSEMBLY HIGHER EDUCATION COMMITTEE

## STATEMENT TO

### ASSEMBLY, No. 3805

# STATE OF NEW JERSEY

DATED: MAY 5, 2021

The Assembly Higher Education Committee reports favorably Assembly Bill No. 3805.

This bill establishes an annual grant program under the State's Troops to College Program which was established in 2009 to assist New Jersey's public institutions of higher education in coordinating the provision of a comprehensive array of services to assist veterans in making the transition into the college classroom. This bill will recognize and support those efforts through the establishment of an annual grant program that will be available to both public and independent institutions of higher education.

Under the bill, the program will be developed by the Secretary of Higher Education, in consultation with the Department of Military and Veterans' Affairs. Under the program, the secretary will annually select up to three institutions of higher education to receive a \$150,000 Troops to College grant. In order to receive a grant, an institution must demonstrate that it is offering a comprehensive array of services, benefits, and programs for veterans attending the institution.

The bill outlines a number of factors that the secretary will consider in awarding the grants that include among others: the total number of self-reporting veterans enrolled in the institution; the existence of a veterans' affairs office at the institution and the number of staff assigned to the office; whether the institution participates in the Yellow Ribbon Program of the "Post-9/11 Veterans Educational Assistance Act of 2008"; the amount of institutional funds allocated to support veterans enrolled in the institution, including the number of scholarships offered to veteran students; whether the institution offers veteran housing or provides an area on campus where veteran students may meet and discuss issues of common interest; the institution's retention and graduation rates for self-reporting veterans enrolled in the institution; and the employment and salary status of self-reporting veterans six years following graduation from the institution.

As reported by the committee, this bill is identical to Senate Bill No. 961 (1R), which was also reported by the committee on this same date.

# Governor Murphy Signs Legislation Supporting Veterans and Servicemembers

07/22/2021

## **Legislative Package Supports Veterans Seeking Higher Education, Expands Access to Disabled Veterans' Property Tax Exemption, and Establishes an Annual Grant Program for Institutions Offering Substantial Veterans Services**

**TRENTON** – Governor Murphy today signed legislation (S-278, S-956, and S-961) which supports New Jersey veterans and servicemembers and grants them easier access to higher education, expands access to the disabled veterans' property tax exemption, and establishes an annual grant program within the Troops to College Program to recognize institutions of higher education that offer extensive veteran programs and services.

“Our veterans and servicemembers have put their lives on the line for their state and for their country,” **said Governor Murphy**. “The least we can do for them is to make their lives easier by expanding access to higher education, broadening eligibility for the disabled veterans' property tax exemption, and encouraging higher education institutions to provide needed services. This legislation will doubtlessly help our veterans and servicemembers in their civilian lives and recognize their service properly.”

“This trio of bills signed by the Governor affirms New Jersey's commitment to our Veterans,” **said Brigadier General Lisa J. Hou, D.O., The Adjutant General and Commissioner of the Department of Military and Veterans Affairs**. “One bill will provide grants to institutions of higher education that assist veterans with programs and services. Tenant shareholders in cooperatives and mutual housing corporations can finally use the property tax exemption that homeowners have used for years. Uniformed service members attending public colleges now have additional rights, such as extended registration time each semester, so they can continue their education while fulfilling their military obligations.”

S-278 broadens the scope of existing law to benefit a wider military community that includes servicemembers who are unable to complete a course due to deployment, mobilization, reassignment, or other military obligation. The bill directs each public institution of higher education to establish policies and procedures to refund course tuition and fees and permit the late registration of students who are veterans or servicemembers affected by deployment, mobilization, reassignment, or other military obligation. Under the bill, the institution cannot charge a late fee or similar penalty on a registration submitted pursuant to the bill's provisions.

Primary sponsors for S-278 include Senators Tom Kean, Jr. and Sandra Cunningham, and Assemblymembers Sterley Stanley, Wayne DeAngelo, and Joseph Daniels.

“New Jersey is becoming more accommodating to the brave men and women who are willing to put their lives on the line to protect our freedoms,” **said Senator Tom Kean, Jr.** “It is challenging enough to work and attend classes, but for those in the military, juggling schedules and managing deadlines is even more cumbersome. The new law will ease some of the burden of earning college credits for members of the military by offering them the flexibility when registering for classes or when military obligations conflict with course schedules.”

“Our active duty military have already given so much, and it is only right we provide them the flexibility they need to pursue a degree,” **said Senator Sandra Cunningham**. “This law will provide for late registration and allow service members to waive course fees if called to duty, making earning a degree

that much more accessible for those in our armed forces.”

“Our military members have to put their plans on hold when they are called to duty in service of this country,” **said Assemblyman Sterley Stanley**. “We should honor their personal sacrifice by making sure the education they received before leaving to fulfill their military responsibilities was not in vain, by allowing them to receive an applicable grade or pick up where they left off upon their return.”

“Students who cannot complete a semester because they have an unexpected, simultaneous obligation to the military deserve the opportunity to earn the educational credits they were working towards before being called away,” **said Assemblyman Wayne DeAngelo**. “It is only fair we allow these service members to have their hard work recognized and any educational fees for services they did not actually get to use be returned to them by their university.”

“This law will greatly benefit military members who are seeking a degree from one of New Jersey’s schools,” **said Assemblyman Joseph Daniels**. “Everyone deserves the opportunity to work towards achieving a higher education, which is why we must accommodate the unique needs of students who may have their semester interrupted in order to serve in our armed forces.”

S-956 exempts from property taxes totally and permanently disabled veterans and their surviving spouses who occupy a unit in a cooperative or mutual housing corporation in which they are tenant shareholders. The bill requires the Division of Taxation to promulgate the necessary implementing regulations which will include provisions that would require cooperatives and mutual housing corporations to pass the full amount of the property tax exemption on to the tenant shareholder who qualified for the benefit.

Primary sponsors for S-956 include Senators Christopher Connors and Brian Stack, and Assemblymembers DiAnne Gove, Brian Rumpf, John Armato, and Vincent Mazzeo.

“For too long, certain disabled veterans were wrongly denied significant property tax relief they deserved due a legal technicality. That changes with the enactment of this bill that advanced with strong bipartisan support,” **said Senator Christopher Connors, Assemblyman Brian Rumpf, and Assemblywoman DiAnne Gove, in a joint statement**.

“By extending the disabled veteran’s property tax exemption to disabled veterans and their surviving spouses that are residents of cooperatives or mutual housing corporations, we can ensure that more of our veterans can reap this benefit,” **said Senator Brian Stack**. “Our veterans put their lives on the line to protect our country, and this extension will be a valuable aid for many more living within our state.”

“Cooperative and mutual housing corporations offer a less expensive alternative to homeownership than being the sole owner of a house, condo or apartment. With many disabled veterans facing significant financial challenges, affordable housing is a critical need that co-ops and mutual housing groups can fill,” **said Assemblymen John Armato and Vincent Mazzeo in a joint statement**. “Since residents of these jointly-owned buildings must pay a share of the property tax, it’s only fair disabled veterans in these residences receive the same tax exemption as fellow veterans living in more traditional homes.”

S-961 creates an annual grant program within the Troops to College Program. The grant program will be developed by the Secretary of Higher Education in consultation with the Department of Military and Veterans’ Affairs. The Secretary will annually select up to three institutions of higher education, public or private, to receive a \$150,000 Troops to College Grant. In order to receive a grant, an institution must demonstrate that it is offering a comprehensive array of services, benefits, and programs to veterans attending the institution.

Primary sponsors for S-961 include Senators Troy Singleton and Nilsa Cruz-Perez, and Assemblymembers John Armato, Andrew Zwicker, and Anthony Verrelli.

“The benefits of this law are two-fold. It recognizes and supports those institutions of higher education in New Jersey that are working to make a college education more accessible to our veterans and most importantly it expands the services they are able to provide,” **said Senator Nilsa Cruz-Perez.** “We owe these men and women a great debt of gratitude for their service to our nation. Expanding their education opportunities is good for them, good for our state and good for our society.”

“Since the Post-9/11 GI Bill was enacted in 2008, New Jersey’s premier colleges and universities have been doing a great job helping our veterans obtain a higher education, finish their degree programs, find employment upon graduation, and most importantly, transition into civilian life again. Yet, there is always more we can do,” **said Senator Troy Singleton.** “This law will expand upon the existing Troops to College Grant Program to further promote and bolster educational opportunities for the men and women who served our country honorably in the Armed Forces.”

“The transition from military service to civilian life can be challenging for many veterans. Higher education can help provide a path forward for veterans as they pursue careers after they leave the service. However, it’s critical for colleges and universities to be equipped with essential services to address the unique needs of veterans,” **said Assemblymen John Armato, Andrew Zwicker and Anthony Verrelli in a joint statement.** “This law will strengthen the efforts of colleges participating in the Troops to College Program, including orientation programs, faculty training, veterans benefit counseling, adaptive learning technologies, and career planning services. This is another small way we can express our gratitude and appreciation for the service of New Jersey’s brave soldiers.”

# This Week in NJ: July 23rd, 2021

07/23/2021



## Governor Murphy Signs Legislation to Provide \$135 Million in Small Business Relief

Governor Murphy signed legislation (S-3982) providing additional aid to small businesses as New Jersey continues to provide support to small businesses as they recover from the pandemic. The bill provides \$135 million to small businesses throughout the state and will be administered by the Economic Development Authority as part of its Phase IV Emergency Grant Program and NJ Community Stage Relief Grant Program.

“As small businesses throughout New Jersey continue to struggle from the economic aftermath of COVID-19, we remain committed to providing them with the resources they need to recover,” **said Governor Murphy.**

“Together with our partners at the federal level, the EDA and other departments have provided more than three quarters of a billion dollars to our small business community as we emerge from the pandemic stronger and more resilient.”

[READ MORE](#)

## Governor Murphy Signs Package of Bills Advancing New Jersey as National Leader in Lead Poisoning Prevention

Governor Phil Murphy reaffirmed his commitment to address lead exposure in New Jersey and its harmful effects on public health and child development by signing a package of bills aimed protecting New Jersey’s families from lead poisoning.



“In October of 2019, I put forth a multifaceted statewide plan to protect New Jersey’s children and families from the dangers of lead, and today, we are taking a significant step forward in our strategy to reduce lead exposure in our homes,” **said Governor Murphy.** “Modernizing our aging water infrastructure with new lead services lines is critical in ensuring safe drinking water flows through our communities. In addition to replacing service lines, we must also go further to protect those in older homes and apartments where door jambs and window sashes may be coated in decades of layers of lead-based paints, creating fine particulates that are unknowingly inhaled and ingested. Today, we are taking the most aggressive action in the nation to reduce lead-based paint exposure in our homes and communities, which is a critical victory for public health and environmental justice, and advances New Jersey as a national leader in lead poisoning prevention.”

[READ MORE](#)

## Governor Murphy Signs Legislation Supporting Veterans and Servicemembers

Governor Murphy signed legislation (S-278, S-956, and S-961) which supports New Jersey veterans and servicemembers and grants them easier access to higher education, expands access to the disabled veterans’ property tax exemption, and establishes an annual grant program within the Troops to College Program to recognize institutions of higher education that offer extensive veteran programs and services.

“Our veterans and servicemembers have put their lives on the line for their state and for their country,” **said Governor Murphy.** “The least we can do for them is to make their lives easier by expanding access to higher education, broadening eligibility for the disabled veterans’ property tax exemption, and encouraging higher education institutions to provide needed services. This legislation will doubtlessly help our veterans and servicemembers in their civilian lives and recognize their service properly.”

[READ MORE](#)

## Governor Murphy Signs Legislation to Expand Civics Instruction in Schools

Governor Phil Murphy signed legislation (S854) requiring civics instruction at the middle school level. Currently, New Jersey is one of a minority of states which does not require civics instruction for middle school students.

“By deepening civics instruction in middle school and high school, we are giving students the tools they need to be more engaged and informed citizens,” **said Governor Murphy**. “An understanding of civics strengthens our democracy by ensuring an understanding of the role that everyone plays in the future of their community, our state, and our nation. I am proud to sign this bill into law and honor Laura Wooten’s incredible civic legacy.”

[READ MORE](#)


## Governor Murphy and Lieutenant Governor Oliver Announce Appointment of State Senator Chris A. Brown, Esq. to the Department of Community Affairs' Division of Local Government Services

Governor Phil Murphy and Lieutenant Governor Sheila Oliver announced that State Senator Chris A. Brown, Esq. will join the Department of Community Affairs' Division of Local Government Services as the Senior Advisor for Atlantic City Affairs, a newly created role in the Department. In this position, Brown will spearhead State initiatives in Atlantic City, including efforts to improve public safety, diversify the economy and create jobs, and improve social services.



“Chris is deeply committed to improving the lives of those who call Atlantic City home, and he will be a tremendous asset for the Administration as we further strengthen the Atlantic City economy and improve quality of life,” **said Governor Murphy.** “I look forward to working together to address issues like economic growth and public safety. With Chris in this new role, and with Sheila at the helm of DCA, the future of Atlantic City has never looked brighter.”

[READ MORE](#)