

Date of Hearing: June 23, 2015

ASSEMBLY COMMITTEE ON HIGHER EDUCATION

Jose Medina, Chair

SB 418 (Morrell) – As Amended April 15, 2015

SENATE VOTE: 36-0

SUBJECT: California State University: readmission.

SUMMARY: Requires the California State University (CSU) to comply with specified federal law regarding readmission requirements for service members attending postsecondary education institutions, and authorizes the CSU to adopt regulations to implement said provisions.

EXISTING LAW:

Federal law. Establishes readmission requirements for service members attending postsecondary education institutions and specifically prohibits an institution from denying readmission to a person who is a member of, applies to be a member of, performs, has performed, applies to perform, or has an obligation to perform, service in the uniformed services on the basis of that membership, application for membership, performance of service, application for service, or obligation to perform service. Specifies that an institution is required to promptly readmit the individual with the same academic status as the student had when he/she last attended the institution or was last admitted to the institution. Requires that the cumulative length of the absence (and of all previous absences from that institution by reason of service, including only the time the student spends actually performing service in the uniformed services) does not exceed five years (Code of Federal Regulations 34, Section 668.18).

State law. Requires each segment (California Community Colleges, CSU, and University of California) of public higher education to establish, and update as necessary, a written policy concerning students who are called to active military service, and specifically requires that the policy ensure that those students do not lose academic credits or degree status, and provide for a refund of fees paid by the student for the term in which he or she was called to active military service (Education Code Section 66023).

FISCAL EFFECT: According to the Senate Appropriations Committee, pursuant to Senate Rule 28.8, negligible state costs.

COMMENTS: *CSU compliance?* According to the CSU, in response to recently modified federal law, on January 10, 2014, all CSU campuses were directed to promptly readmit service member students in the same program with the same enrollment and academic status. Campuses were also advised that student service members may defer their return no later than three years after completing service and may not have a cumulative period of more than five years absence, including service. It appears that the CSU complies with federal law requirements regarding readmission; however, state regulations have not been updated to reflect the federal changes.

Purpose for this measure. According to the author, "The purpose of this bill is to ensure that every campus in the CSU system is in compliance with federal law regarding approved absences for active duty military personnel. CSU has updated its policies to reflect recent [federal]

changes, however, at least one campus still holds to the previous two-year limit on these approved absences."

This measure seeks to ensure that the state is in full compliance with federal law regarding this issue; and, ensures that the CSU Trustees adopt regulations that all CSU campuses must implement.

REGISTERED SUPPORT / OPPOSITION:

Support

None on file.

Opposition

None on file.

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