

RALPH DLG. TORRES
Governor



COMMONWEALTH OF THE NORTHERN MARIANA ISLANDS
OFFICE OF THE GOVERNOR

13 APR 2022

The Honorable Jude U. Hofschneider
President of the Senate
Twenty-Second Northern Marianas
Commonwealth Legislature
Saipan, MP 96950

The Honorable Edmund S. Villagomez
Speaker, House of Representatives
Twenty-Second Northern Marianas
Commonwealth Legislature
Saipan, MP 96950

Dear Mr. President and Mr. Speaker:

This is to inform you that I have signed into law **Senate Bill No. 22-18, SD1, HD2** entitled, "To waive the Northern Marianas College tuition for a veteran with 30 percent or greater service-connected disability; and for other purposes.", which was passed by the Senate and the House of Representatives of the Twenty-Second Northern Marianas Commonwealth Legislature.

This bill becomes **Public Law No. 22-16**. Copies bearing my signature are forwarded for your reference.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Ralph DLG. Torres", written over the printed name and title.

RALPH DLG. TORRES
Governor

cc: Acting Press Secretary; Attorney General's Office; Northern Marianas College; Military and Veterans Affairs; Commonwealth Law Revision Commission; Public Auditor; Special Assistant for Administration; Special Assistant for Programs and Legislative Review



THE SENATE

Twenty-Second Northern Marianas Commonwealth Legislature
P. O. Box 500129
Saipan, MP 96950

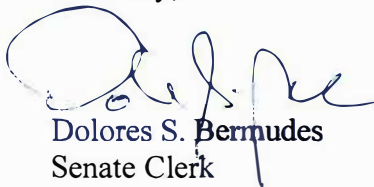
March 08, 2022

The Honorable Ralph DLG. Torres
Governor
Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands
Capital Hill
Saipan, MP 96950

Dear Governor Torres:

I have the honor of transmitting herewith for your action Senate Bill No. 22-18, SD1, HD2, entitled: "To waive the Northern Marianas College tuition for a veteran with 30 percent or greater service-connected disability; and for other purposes," which was passed by the Senate and the House of Representatives of the Twenty-Second Northern Marianas Commonwealth Legislature.

Sincerely,


Dolores S. Bermudes
Senate Clerk

Attachments



THE SENATE
TWENTY-SECOND NORTHERN MARIANAS COMMONWEALTH LEGISLATURE

SENATE BILL NO. 22-16, SD1, HD2

AN ACT

To waive the Northern Marianas College tuition for a veteran with 30 percent or greater service-connected disability; and for other purposes.

SENATE ACTION

Offered by Senator(s): Francisco Q. Cruz

Date: February 03, 2021

Referred to: Committee on Health, Education, and Welfare

Standing Committee Report No.: 22-30 – Adopted 07/08/21


Final Reading: March 03, 2022 accepted and passed HD2

HOUSE ACTION

Referred to: Education Committee

Standing Committee Report No.: 22-28 Adopted on 12/01/21

First and Final Reading: February 22, 2022


DOLORES S. BERMUDES
SENATE CLERK



THE SENATE
TWENTY-SECOND NORTHERN MARIANAS COMMONWEALTH LEGISLATURE

FIRST REGULAR SESSION, 2021

S. B. NO. 22-18, SD1, HD2

AN ACT

To waive the Northern Marianas College tuition for a veteran with 30 percent or greater service-connected disability; and for other purposes.

BE IT ENACTED BY THE TWENTY-SECOND NORTHERN MARIANAS COMMONWEALTH LEGISLATURE:

1 **Section 1. Findings and Purpose.** The Legislature acknowledges the sacrifices
2 made by veterans on battlefields, on the sea and air, and every other place where their
3 contributions have allowed us to live free. They deserve the recognition and appreciation,
4 and they should be accorded certain benefits for their sacrifices.

5 The Legislature finds that numerous states provide several benefits for veterans.
6 The State of California provides two separate tax exemptions; one for veterans and one for
7 disabled veterans. California also waives motor vehicle registration fees and free license
8 plates for one passenger motor vehicle, or one motorcycle, or one commercial motor
9 vehicle of less than 8001 unladen weight. It also provides reduced annual fishing and
10 hunting licenses to any veteran with a 50 percent or greater service-connected disability.

11 The legislature finds that active military veterans, reserve military called to active
12 duty have served their country and have risked their lives to defend the lives of all
13 Americans and the freedoms that define and distinguish our nation. The legislature intends
14 to honor active military veterans who have served on active military for the public service
15 they have provided to our mother country.

16 The Legislature finds that the Commonwealth should extend certain benefits to

SENATE BILL NO. 22-18, SD1, HD2

1 veterans who have served our country and have returned home. Some of these veterans
2 may plan to pursue a change in career that may require postsecondary education that leads
3 to a college degree.

4 The purpose of this Act is to waive the tuition imposed by the Northern Marianas
5 College for qualified veterans who have been certified to have 30 percent or greater
6 service-connected disability.

7 **Section 2. Enactment.** Subject to the codification by the Law Revision
8 Commission, the following is hereby enacted:

9 **“Section 101. Definitions.**

10 a. ‘Eligible veteran’ means a CNMI resident who was an active member of
11 the United States military, who served in active federal service, under either Title
12 10 or Title 32 of the United States Code and is certified to have at least 30 percent
13 disability as a result of serving in active military service, and if discharged from
14 service, has received an honorable discharge.

15 b. ‘CNMI resident’ means a person residing in the CNMI who is classified
16 as a resident for tuition-paying purposes based on the definitions of a resident
17 student established by NMC Policy No. 4001 Residency Classification.

18 **Section 102. Tuition Waiver for Veterans.**

19 (a) Notwithstanding any law or regulation to the contrary, the governing
20 board of the Northern Marianas College shall waive the tuition for an eligible
21 veteran as defined in Section 101. The costs other than tuition - such as for books,
22 student activity and laboratory fees, and other applicable fees- are not waived.

23 (b) NMC shall assist each applicant apply and submit to the institution, in
24 the form and manner prescribed by NMC, an application for the waiver and
25 necessary evidence that the applicant qualifies for the waiver not later than the last
26 class date of the semester or term to which the waiver applies.

27 (c) The waiver from tuition does not apply to a veteran who at the time of
28 registration is entitled to receive, but did not apply for, educational benefits under
29 both federal and local legislation that may be used only for the payment of tuition if

SENATE BILL NO. 22-18, SD1, HD2

1 the value of those benefits received in a semester is equal to or exceeds the value of
2 the waiver for the same semester. If the value of both federal and local benefits that
3 may be used only for the payment of tuition and are received in a semester does not
4 equal or exceed the value of the waiver for the same semester, the person is entitled
5 to receive the waiver balance for the same semester only after all federal and local
6 tuition benefits have been applied.

7 (d) This waiver shall not apply to any courses from which the veteran has
8 withdrawn after the withdrawal period or any courses from which the veteran has
9 failed to receive a passing grade. Provided that this waiver may apply to courses
10 where the veteran, with the permission of the relevant Dean of his or her program,
11 withdrew due to reasonable factors beyond his or her control.

Section 103. Enrollment.

12 A veteran who receives a waiver under subsection 102 may pursue an
13 associate, bachelor's, or master's degree.

Section 104. Regulations.

14 The Board of Regents shall promulgate any necessary regulations to carry
15 out the intent of this Act.”

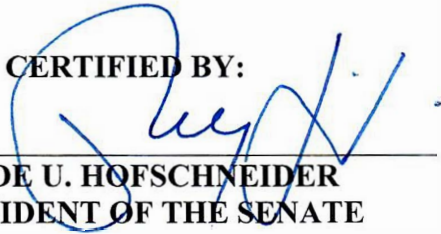
16 **Section 3. Severability.** If any provision of this Act or the application of any such
17 provision to any person or circumstance should be held invalid by a court of competent
18 jurisdiction, the remainder of this Act or the application of its provisions to persons or
19 circumstances other than those to which it is held invalid shall not be affected thereby.

20 **Section 4. Savings Clause.** This Act and any repealer contained herein shall not be
21 construed as affecting any existing right acquired under contract or acquired under statutes
22 repealed or under any rule, regulation, or order adopted under the statutes. Repealers
23 contained in this Act shall not affect any proceeding instituted under or pursuant to prior
24 law. The enactment of the Act shall not have the effect of terminating, or in any way
25 modifying, any liability, civil or criminal, which shall already be in existence on the date
26 this Act becomes effective.
27
28

SENATE BILL NO. 22-18, SD1, HD2

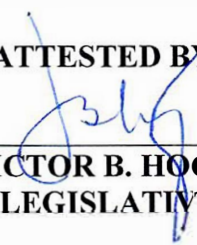
1 **Section 5. Effective Date.** This Act shall take effect upon its approval by the
2 Governor or becoming law without such approval.

CERTIFIED BY:



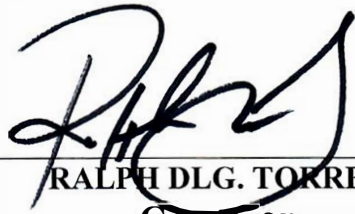
JUDE U. HOFSCHEIDER
PRESIDENT OF THE SENATE

ATTESTED BY:



VICTOR B. HOCO
SENATE LEGISLATIVE SECRETARY

Approved this 13th day of April, 2022



RALPH DLG. TORRES
Governor

Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands