



MANPOWER AND
RESERVE AFFAIRS

OFFICE OF THE ASSISTANT SECRETARY OF DEFENSE
1500 DEFENSE PENTAGON
WASHINGTON, D.C. 20301-1500

January 11, 2021

Honorable Mark Owens
Chair, House Education Committee
North Dakota House of Representatives
State Capitol
600 East Boulevard
Bismarck, ND 58505

RE: HB1107- An ACT Relating to Student In-State tuition rates

Dear Representative Owens,

On behalf of military families and the Department of Defense, I am writing to address expressed questions regarding policy changes proposed in HB 1107, a bill that addresses residency requirements for attendance at post-secondary public institutions for the purpose of tuition.

My name is James Rickel and I am the Central Regional Liaison for the Defense-State Liaison Office, operating under the direction of Under Secretary of Defense for Personnel and Readiness, and the Deputy Assistant Secretary for Military Community and Family Policy. Our mission is to serve as a resource to state policymakers as they work to address quality of life issues for military families.

Many states offer in-state tuition to our military families based on the fact they have incurred multiple moves throughout K-12. In addition, they may not have met the requirement to become a "resident" in the state and are forced to pay out of state tuition rates. This causes an undue financial hardship to the military family or further limits the school choice for our military college age students.

Approximately 185,000 U.S. military children move between schools annually and are routinely reassigned with their military sponsors to new duty stations in the summer, due to mission and training requirements. As a result of these summer moves, students typically miss important education application dates that occur in the spring. We believe that a spouse or child of an active member of the armed forces assigned to duty in a state at the time of the dependent receiving a letter of acceptance should be deemed an in-state resident for purposes of determining tuition and fees, regardless of the service member's follow-on status provided the student is continuously enrolled.

Considering there are over 90,000 college aged military children, we have placed this issue in our "Top Ten" list of prioritized Personnel and Readiness issues.

We are grateful for the tremendous efforts that North Dakota has historically made to support our military members and their families. We appreciate the opportunity to support the policy reflected in HB 1107, and are especially grateful to Representative Pyle for introducing this important piece of legislation. Thank you for taking the time to consider this issue. Please feel free to contact me with any questions.

Sincerely,

James D. Rickel
Central Regional Liaison
Defense – State Liaison Office