

## HOUSE BILL NO. 158

INTRODUCED BY R. PEPPERS, K. ABBOTT, B. SMITH

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4 A BILL FOR AN ACT ENTITLED: "AN ACT REVISING THE PURPLE HEART SCHOLARSHIP PROGRAM;  
5 INCLUDING RECIPIENTS OF HIGHER MEDALS FOR COMBAT-RELATED SERVICE; ESTABLISHING A  
6 SPECIAL REVENUE ACCOUNT; PROVIDING FOR A TRANSFER AND AN APPROPRIATION; AMENDING  
7 SECTION 10-2-118, MCA; AND PROVIDING AN EFFECTIVE DATE."

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9 BE IT ENACTED BY THE LEGISLATURE OF THE STATE OF MONTANA:

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11 **Section 1.** Section 10-2-118, MCA, is amended to read:

12 **"10-2-118. State scholarship for eligible ~~purple heart~~ armed forces medal recipients -- special**  
13 **revenue account.** (1) There is a state scholarship program for eligible ~~purple heart~~ recipients of a purple heart  
14 or a higher medal for combat-related service in the armed forces.

15 (2) The board shall administer the program pursuant to this section.

16 ~~(2)~~(3) A person is eligible for the scholarship provided for in subsection ~~(3)~~ (4) if the person:

17 (a) is a recipient of the purple heart or a higher medal for combat-related service in the armed forces as  
18 verified by an authentic department of defense form 214 (DD 214) or other authentic military discharge form listing  
19 awards;

20 (B) DID NOT RECEIVE A DISHONORABLE OR OTHER THAN HONORABLE DISCHARGE;

21 ~~(b)~~(C) is a resident of Montana; and

22 ~~(c)~~(D) has been enrolled for a full academic year as a full-time or part-time student at an accredited ~~state~~  
23 public university, or state public vocational or technical school, or tribal college located in Montana either prior  
24 to or after military service, has maintained a grade point average of at least ~~2.0~~ ~~3.0~~ 2.5 on a 4.0 grade point scale,  
25 and has reenrolled to continue the student's higher education at ~~an accredited state university or state vocational~~  
26 or technical school the educational institution.

27 ~~(3)~~(4) ~~Each~~ (A) EXCEPT AS PROVIDED IN SUBSECTION (4)(B), EACH student who meets the criteria set forth  
28 in subsection ~~(2)~~ (3) is eligible to receive a \$1,000 scholarship as provided in subsection ~~(4)~~ (5).

29 (B) AN ELIGIBLE STUDENT WHO DOES NOT HAVE ANY OUT-OF-POCKET COSTS FOR TUITION BECAUSE THE  
30 STUDENT IS A RECIPIENT OF U.S. DEPARTMENT OF VETERANS AFFAIRS EDUCATION BENEFITS IS NOT ELIGIBLE FOR A

1 SCHOLARSHIP UNDER THIS SECTION.

2 ~~(4)~~(5) (a) The ~~state~~ educational institution in which the eligible student is enrolled shall verify the  
3 student's eligibility and apply to the board, on a form prescribed by the board, for the scholarship. Except as  
4 provided in subsection ~~(5)~~ (6), upon receipt of the scholarship application, the board shall pay the scholarship  
5 money to the educational institution.

6 (b) The educational institution shall provide the scholarship money to the eligible student in the form of  
7 a voucher that the eligible student may apply toward the cost of tuition, books, transportation, or housing.

8 ~~(5)~~(6) The scholarship may be paid only to the extent that funding is available. Scholarship awards must  
9 be paid in the order that the applications are received by the board. An eligible recipient may receive one  
10 scholarship a year for each year the recipient meets the criteria established in subsection (3).

11 (7) There is a special revenue account to the credit of the department of military affairs for the purposes  
12 of this section. Money in the account may be used only to administer the scholarship program and to pay  
13 scholarships to eligible recipients under this section."

14  
15 NEW SECTION. Section 2. Transfer and appropriation -- funding included in base budget --  
16 periodic review. (1) The state treasurer shall transfer \$50,000 from the general fund to the special revenue  
17 account established in [section 1(7)] by August 15, 2019.

18 (2) There is appropriated \$50,000 from the account established in [section 1(7)] to the department of  
19 military affairs for the purposes established in [section 1] for the biennium beginning July 1, 2019.

20 (3) The department shall include \$50,000 for the scholarship program in its base budget for the biennium  
21 beginning July 1, 2021, shall periodically review the sufficiency of this amount, and shall recommend changes  
22 to this amount as considered appropriate to pay the scholarships under [section 1].

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24 NEW SECTION. Section 3. Effective date. [This act] is effective July 1, 2019.

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