

SCS SB 701 & 948 -- NATIONAL GUARD MEMBER EDUCATIONAL ASSISTANCE GRANTS

SPONSOR: Crowell (Jackson)

COMMITTEE ACTION: Voted "do pass by consent" by the Committee on Veterans by a vote of 11 to 0.

Currently, a recipient of an educational assistance grant from the National Guard is required to maintain his or her military affiliation while enrolled in a course of study. This substitute requires that the guard member maintain his or her active military affiliation for the academic semester or term.

FISCAL NOTE: No impact on state funds in FY 2007, FY 2008, and FY 2009.

PROPOSERS: Supporters say that the bill is intended to help guard members who are activated. Currently, the National Guard will not provide tuition assistance unless the recipient will have three active years left in the enrollment period. Most individuals join for eight years and spend up to five working on their degree, leaving three years. Many have been activated and cannot receive a four-year degree and have three years left in the enrollment period. The bill says that, as long as a member is on active drill status, he or she is eligible for educational assistance.

Testifying for the bill were Senator Crowell; and Office of the Adjutant General.

OPPOSERS: There was no opposition voiced to the committee.

Alice Hurley, Legislative Analyst