



2025 South Dakota Legislature

Senate Concurrent Resolution 603

Introduced by: **Senator** Zikmund

1 **A CONCURRENT RESOLUTION, Supporting the establishment of a standardized**
 2 **system to recognize and award academic credit or certification for**
 3 **military service.**

4 WHEREAS, veterans are in need of academic, post-military degrees, certifications, and
 5 credentialing that are universally recognizable by employers for employment opportunities;
 6 and

7 WHEREAS, the United States Department of Defense spares no expense to provide
 8 servicemembers with some of the best training and education in the nation in various
 9 technical, leadership, and academic fields; and

10 WHEREAS, military service often involves extensive training and education that is
 11 equivalent to or exceeds the standards of civilian colleges and universities; and

12 WHEREAS, the American Council on Education has evaluated the training of military
 13 occupations for the Joint Services Transcript and provides recommendations for awarding
 14 postsecondary credit for such training; and

15 WHEREAS, over two thousand three hundred institutions of higher education have signed
 16 the Department of Defense Voluntary Education Partnership Memorandum of Understanding,
 17 to provide educational opportunities to servicemembers who, because they frequently moved
 18 from place-to-place, had trouble completing college degrees; and

19 WHEREAS, the Department of Defense Voluntary Education Partnership functions in
 20 cooperation with higher education associations to expand and improve voluntary
 21 postsecondary education opportunities for servicemembers worldwide; and

1 WHEREAS, in the civilian sector, there are many high-demand, technical career fields that
2 require training, education, and certification, and are critically short of qualified employees;
3 and

4 WHEREAS, recognizing and providing standard credit for military service can facilitate the
5 transition of servicemembers into postsecondary education and civilian careers, and promote
6 lifelong learning; and

7 WHEREAS, recognition can contribute to the attainment of educational goals and further
8 professional development among veterans, and alleviate critical skill and employment
9 shortages in the civilian workforce; and

10 WHEREAS, the Department of Defense has already paid to train personnel for military
11 occupations, and the taxpayers of the United States should not be burdened by paying for
12 additional training in the form of the tuition assistance, the G.I. Bill, or any federally funded
13 training programs; and

14 WHEREAS, the federal government, students, states, and employers spend hundreds of
15 billions of dollars on higher education every year, yet servicemembers are still required to
16 take courses that have been recommended by the American Council on Education for credit;
17 and

18 WHEREAS, Department of Defense tuition assistance, Department of Veterans Affairs
19 education benefits, and any form of the G.I. Bill all require evaluation and a fully completed
20 degree or certificate plan to ensure compliance with applicable regulations;

21 NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, by the Senate of the One Hundredth Legislature of
22 the State of South Dakota, the House of Representatives concurring therein, that the
23 Legislature supports the establishment of a standardized system to recognize and
24 appropriately award academic credit or certification for military service based on the American
25 Council on Education recommendations used for the Joint Services Transcript; and

26 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that the Legislature urges all postsecondary institutions in this
27 state to work collaboratively with the Department of Defense and relevant military agencies
28 to develop and implement a comprehensive framework for assessing military training and
29 experience for college credit; and

1 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that the Legislature calls upon Congress to enact legislation
2 requiring all postsecondary institutions that accept federal funds to adopt policies recognizing
3 the educational value of military service, and provide appropriate postsecondary credit, in
4 accordance with the American Council on Education recommendations and validated
5 competencies; and

6 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that the Legislature encourages all postsecondary institutions
7 in this state to establish clear and transparent procedures for evaluating military training and
8 experience, granting credit where appropriate, and ensuring that veterans receive fair and
9 equitable treatment in the pursuit of higher education.