



2025 South Dakota Legislature
Senate Concurrent Resolution 603
ENROLLED

AN ACT

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

Adopted by the Senate,
Concurred in by the House of Representatives,

February 4, 2025
February 13, 2025

Chris Karr
President Pro Tempore
of the Senate

Peggy Laurenz
Secretary of the Senate

Jon Hansen
Speaker of the House

Patricia Miller
Chief Clerk