

GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF NORTH CAROLINA

Session 2015

Legislative Fiscal Note

BILL NUMBER: Senate Bill 37 (First Edition)
SHORT TITLE: Waive Tuition/Fallen Officer Was Guardian.
SPONSOR(S): Senator Apodaca

FISCAL IMPACT					
(\$ in millions)					
	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input type="checkbox"/> No	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No Estimate Available		
State Impact	FY 2015-16	FY 2016-17	FY 2017-18	FY 2018-19	FY 2019-20
General Fund Revenues:					
General Fund Expenditures:					
State Positions:					
NET STATE IMPACT	\$0.0	\$0.0	\$0.0	\$0.0	\$0.0
PRINCIPAL DEPARTMENT(S) & PROGRAM(S) AFFECTED:					
University of North Carolina and North Carolina Community College System					
EFFECTIVE DATE: 2015 Fall Academic Semester					
TECHNICAL CONSIDERATIONS:					
None					

BILL SUMMARY: North Carolina currently allows tuition waivers for the biological children of law-enforcement officers, fire fighters (paid or volunteer), and rescue squad workers who were either killed or permanently disabled in the line of duty. The tuition waiver applies to institutions under the University of North Carolina System (UNC) and the North Carolina Community College System (NCCCS) (see G.S. 115B). Senate Bill 37 would expand this waiver to include children whose legal guardians were killed or disabled in the line of duty. The institutions granting a waiver are required to establish an approval process for evidence establishing the guardian relationship as well.

ASSUMPTIONS AND METHODOLOGY: There is not available data on law-enforcement officers, fire fighters, and rescue squad workers *and* whom also serve as a legal guardian. The information in the following section does provide data about recent historical experiences for the existing program.

The UNC System provided information for the past two academic years for those receiving a waiver due to the death of a parent who was a law-enforcement officers, fire fighters, volunteer fire fighters, or rescue workers. The table below provides the information:

Table 1: UNC Tuition Waivers for Children under G.S. 115B

Academic Year	Number of Waivers	Average Tuition Waived
2012-13	13	\$3,499
2013-14	10	\$4,439

The tuition waived will vary by the institution where the child is seeking enrollment. The average UNC System proposed NC resident tuition rate for the 2014-15 academic year is \$4,117 (The UNC Board of Governors is set to vote on tuition and fees on Feb. 27, 2015).

NCCCS also provided information for the past two academic years for those children receiving a waiver under G.S. 115B. For the 2013-14 academic year, the campuses of the NCCCS waived a total of \$9,026 in tuition. The per credit hour tuition rate NC residents for the current academic year is \$72.

Finally, the Department of The State Treasurer provided data regarding the number of individuals who have received the Line of Duty Death Benefit under Article 12A of G.S. 143, which includes the individuals under G.S. 115B. However, this information does not include those who have children or were the guardians of children, and is provided for contextual purposes only. For the past three calendar years, the following new deaths who would receive a benefit are as follows:

Table 2: New Deaths Eligible to Receive a Line of Duty Death Benefit

Calendar Year	Deaths
2012	12
2013	6
2014	1

Given the low number of children currently requesting a waiver under G.S. 115B and the low number of new deaths eligible to receive a benefit under Article 12A of G.S. 143, it is expected that expanding a tuition waiver for the children whose non-biological guardians were law-enforcement officers, fire fighters, volunteer fire fighters, and rescue squad workers who were either killed or permanently disabled in the line of duty would be negligible.

SOURCES OF DATA: Department of State Treasurer, UNC System, NCCCS

TECHNICAL CONSIDERATIONS: None

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