

## Policy Brief on Amendment to AB24

### **1) Issuing Organizations**

UNLV Rebel Vets

### **2) Title**

Amendment to AB24 of the 79th Legislative Session

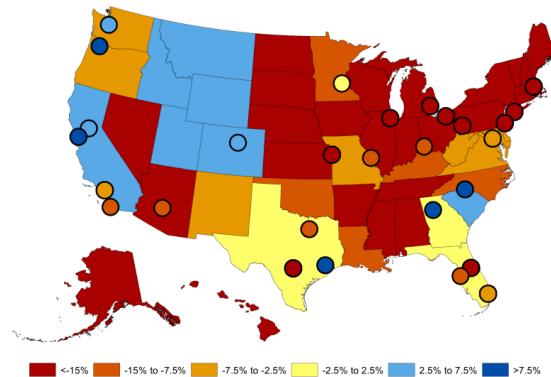
### **3) Description of the problem and proposition of the preferred policy**

AB24 is a bill that grants an in-state tuition charge waiver to any veteran who is matriculating at an NSHE institution within 5 years of military discharge and for any military family member using VA Education benefits a 3 year waiver . This amendment would grant a waiver of in-state tuition for any veteran or military affiliated student using benefits who is matriculating at an NSHE institution without a time limit following military discharge. For the purpose of this policy brief, “tuition charge” means a charge assessed against students who are not residents of Nevada that is in addition to registration fees or other fees assessed against students who are residents of Nevada. A military affiliated student is any person utilizing a VA education benefits earned by a veteran or sponsor’s military service.

### **4) Presentation of selected policy options and discussion of their impact**

There is ample research that suggests that there will be a predicted “enrollment cliff” of eligible entry level freshmen students in the coming years. They predict this cliff will begin to impact colleges in Nevada significantly in 2025 with a 15% drop and continue to drop into 2029 (Grawe, 2018). The enrollment cliff is a result of America’s declining birthrate, due to the uncertain economic times and has failed to rebound (Barshay, 2018). This cliff will have significant impacts on Nevada as recruiting will be in competition with other states for the same pool of eligible freshmen students. As colleges across America focus on recruiting non-traditional students – every state will be looking to recruit veterans or military affiliated students with VA benefits, who arrive on campus with full tuition funding. This bill will help us be competitive in this new emerging market.

## Policy Brief on Amendment to AB24



Only a handful of states, colored in blue, are predicted to see an increase in the number of students attending regional four-year colleges and universities between 2012 and 2029. The rest will see declines in students. In the red-colored states, the drop in students will exceed 15%. The dots represent large metropolitan areas. These urban college markets, such as San Diego, may diverge from their state's or region's trends. Credit: Nathan D. Grawe

Currently, AB24 covers waivers to any veteran who matriculates at an NSHE institution within 5 years of their military discharge. The federal regulation allows 3 years of matriculation at a system of higher education, and the school would have to waive any tuition charges. Although Nevada has granted an extended 2 years of tuition waiver, the passing of H.R. 3218 of the 115th Congress, also known as the Forever GI Bill, has granted veterans the ability to use their GI Bill education benefits with no expiration date for any veteran receiving an honorable discharge after January 1, 2013. Previously, the GI Bill had an expiration date of 15 years starting on the day of discharge. With the policy change in veteran education benefits, a veteran could use their GI Bill at any point of his or her life. The current Nevada policy would deter those veterans, who wait to return to school.

We can predict the value of this change through studying the effects that the 2008 economic recession had on individuals going back to school to learn new skills. (Census, 2018) With the shutting down of the US economy as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic, we can predict that the same results will occur for individuals wanting to enhance their resume by attending college and learning new skills. The tuition that students would have to pay if they matriculate after the 5 years currently stipulated by AB24 would cause a deterrence to any potential student veteran wanting to move to Nevada to attend school. Nevada will not be competitive with states like Texas and Florida that have no time limit. Arizona offers a tuition waiver for any veteran who can easily qualify. Oregon offers “Nonresident Veteran In-State Tuition” that eliminates any tuition costs higher than those of state resident students

### 5) Recommendations

## Policy Brief on Amendment to AB24

We are recommending that NSHE grant veterans a waiver of all tuition charges for veterans and any military affiliated student using VA Education benefits seeking to attend an NSHE institution from out of state. The opportunities the state would lose out on is far too great to not be considered and would make Nevada a less competitive state. Out-of-state tuition fees can range up to \$14,000 a year. The GI Bill education benefit pays up to 36 months of all fees and basic allowances for housing, textbooks and supplies. Comparing Nevada to many States in the Union, Nevada is less likely to be considered an attractive option by veterans seeking higher education and therefore may lose out on the economic and academic opportunities that veterans bring with them when moving to the State. We recommend that NSHE determine a metric that will thereby waive any tuition cost to veterans moving into the state.

### **6) Concluding remarks**

Student veterans are leading in graduation rates across the nation. Service members have real-world experience and advanced training in certain fields. Removing obstacles that could prevent veterans from coming to Nevada would make Nevada more attractive for veterans and their dependents seeking to leave their state to advance their education, and could positively impact Nevada's workforce. Offering an in-state tuition waiver would complement the federal "Forever GI Bill" benefit because an eligible veteran would be granted the opportunity to use his or her education benefits at any point in their lives. When a veteran decides it is time to attend a college or university, we want any of schools in Nevada to be an attractive option.

## Policy Brief on Amendment to AB24

### 7) References

- Barshay, Jill. College students predicted to fall by more than 15% after the year 2025. September 10, 2018. <https://hechingerreport.org/college-students-predicted-to-fall-by-more-than-15-after-the-year-2025/>
- U.S. Census. Postsecondary Enrollment Before, During and After the Great Recession. June 12, 2018. <https://www.census.gov/newsroom/press-releases/2018/postsecondary.html>
- Grawe, Nathan D. Demographics and the Demand for Higher Education. Johns Hopkins University Press. January 1, 2018.