

**Standing Committees**

Armed Services and Veterans Affairs – Chair  
House Finance  
Finance Subcommittee on Higher Education  
Higher Education



**Special Committees**

Aerospace and Aviation Technology – Chair  
Joint Legislative Veterans Caucus – Chair  
Third Frontier Commission Advisory Board  
Latino Affairs Commission

**State Representative Rick Perales**

Ohio's 73<sup>rd</sup> House District: Western Portion of Greene County

**House Bill 16 – Military In-State Tuition**

**Senate testimony**

**26 June 2019**

Chair Kunze, Vice Chair Gavarone, Ranking Member Williams, and members of the Senate Higher Education Committee, thank you for the opportunity to testify today on behalf of House Bill 16, a bill that would help reduce the cost of education for Active Duty Service members and their eligible family members. A bill that recently passed unanimously in the House with 85 co-sponsors.

We all recognize the tremendous sacrifices service members and their families make for citizens of the United States. Their service to our country is brave and commendable, and it is the reason I and many in this body are so passionate about supporting our service members, veterans, and their families. Oftentimes, retired service members struggle to find uses in the civilian world for the valuable skills they learned during their time in Active Duty. Beyond that, some servicewomen and men serve their country honorably but have a different vision for their lives beyond the military.

Moreover, dependents of Active Duty members sometimes find themselves calling a new place home every few years or even months. Without a place to permanently call home, it is hard to justify limiting a dependent's college choices to the state in which his or her parent or guardian was last stationed or their service member's home of record.

Ohio's universities are very supportive of military members and vets continuing their education, but currently have varying levels of tuition support for our Armed Forces members and their dependents. This bill will ensure consistency across the board by waiving the 1-year residency requirement and immediately making all Active Duty members and their dependents eligible for in-state tuition. With House Bill 16, we have the opportunity to drastically reduce the economic burden of attending postsecondary institutions for service members who wish to further their education and their family's education in Ohio, and at the same time help solidify Ohio as the most military friendly state in the nation.

We know that many people who attend college in our great state choose to stay. These college graduates then influence our work force and economy, and make an impact on the communities around them. If we could make Ohio's higher education institutions viable options for current Active Duty members and their families, we would grow our workforce; from both

dependents remaining in the state for school and career opportunities, as well as service members who may choose to make Ohio their home after they hang up their uniform.

Beyond the numbers, this is a small step we can take to show our military members and their families that we support them and that we appreciate them during their service to our country. We have received the support of the Inter-University Council, the voluntary educational association of Ohio's public universities. Additionally, this bill is supported by the Office of Military Community and Family Policy under the Deputy Assistant Secretary of Defense, as it is one of the Top 10 Key Issues they are addressing nationwide. To our knowledge it is the only bill of its kind in the country and will put us ahead of competitors when it comes to D.o.D mission allocations.

It is for these reasons that I request favorable consideration of House Bill 16. Chair Kunze, Vice Chair Gavarone, Ranking Member Williams, and members of the Senate Higher Education Committee I thank you for the opportunity to testify today and will answer any questions you may have.