

VIRGINIA ACTS OF ASSEMBLY — CHAPTER

An Act to amend the Code of Virginia by adding sections numbered 2.1-27.2:01 and 22.1-17.4, relating to the Virginia World War II Veterans Appreciation Week and certain honorary high school diplomas.

[S 1210]

Approved

Whereas, between 1939 and 1945, World War II — the most devastating war to occur on earth — raged across Europe, Africa, Asia, and the Pacific islands; and

Whereas, more than 16 million young Americans, many of whom left high school as mere teenagers to take up this cause, served in the United States Armed Forces during this period, defending their country and humanity; and

Whereas, the economic and personal loss suffered by these young Americans can only be imagined, with lives interrupted and inexorably altered; and

Whereas, upon returning, many of these young Americans were unable to resume their schooling because of economic and other personal reasons; and

Whereas, these young Americans reentered society and made significant contributions to our country through their hard work as civilians, while gaining substantial knowledge and skills through work; and

Whereas, in the golden years of their lives, the veterans of World War II have earned and do deserve our esteem and gratitude and our acknowledgement that without their sacrifices, our lives would not be the same as they are today; now, therefore,

Be it enacted by the General Assembly of Virginia:

1. That the Code of Virginia is amended by adding sections numbered 2.1-27.2:01 and 22.1-17.4 as follows:

§ 2.1-27.2:01. Virginia World War II Veterans Appreciation Week; honorary diplomas to be awarded under certain circumstances during such week.

A. In recognition of the sacrifice of the members of the United States Armed Forces who served in World War II, the first full week in September, i.e., the week that was the first full official week of peace in 1945, shall hereby be designated the Virginia World War II Veterans Appreciation Week, beginning in September 2001.

In accordance with the Board of Education's guidelines as authorized by § 22.1-17.4, any veteran of World War II may apply for a Commonwealth of Virginia World War II Veteran Honorary High School Diploma by filing with the Virginia Board of Education a statement declaring that:

1. During the years between 1939 and 1945, he served in any branch of the United States Armed Forces;

2. He was drafted or did enlist in the United States Armed Forces while still enrolled as a secondary school student in any school in any state or territory of the United States or any school located on or associated with a United States military base or embassy; and

3. He was unable to resume his secondary education upon returning to civilian life.

B. Upon receiving a statement in compliance with this section and § 22.1-17.4 that has been filed in accordance with its guidelines, the Board of Education shall award the veteran a Commonwealth of Virginia World War II Veteran Honorary High School Diploma. Such diploma shall be delivered during Virginia World War II Veterans Appreciation Week.

§ 22.1-17.4. Certain honorary diplomas to be issued under specific circumstances.

A. Any veteran of World War II may apply to the Board of Education for a Commonwealth of Virginia World War II Veteran Honorary High School Diploma by filing, in compliance with Board guidelines, a statement declaring that:

1. During the years between 1939 and 1945, he served in any branch of the United States Armed Forces;

2. He was drafted or did enlist in the United States Armed Forces while still enrolled as a secondary school student in any school in any state or territory of the United States or any school located on or associated with a United States military base or embassy; and

3. He was unable to resume his secondary education upon returning to civilian life.

B. The Board of Education shall establish guidelines setting forth the timelines and procedures for applying for such diplomas. Upon the filing of the required statement in accordance with its guidelines, the Board of Education shall award the veteran a Commonwealth of Virginia World War II Veteran Honorary High School Diploma. Such diplomas shall be delivered to eligible veterans during the first

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- 57** *full week in September that has been designated, in accordance with § 2.1-27.2:01, as the Virginia*
58 *World War II Veterans Appreciation Week.*