

Department of Planning and Budget 2001 Fiscal Impact Statement

1. **Bill Number** SB1210

House of Origin Introduced Substitute Engrossed

Second House In Committee Substitute **ENROLLED**

2. **Patron** Forbes

3. **Committee** Rules

4. **Title** World War II Veterans Appreciation Week; certain honorary diplomas.

5. **Summary/Purpose:** Establishes the first full week in September, i.e., the week that was the first full official week of peace in 1945 (the war was officially over on September 2, 1945, upon the formal surrender of Japan aboard the United States battleship, Missouri) as the Virginia World War II Veterans Appreciation Week and provides for the application for and award of honorary state high school diplomas by the state Board of Education under certain circumstances. Veterans who meet the following criteria may apply for one of the special diplomas: the veteran served in any branch of the United States Armed Forces during the years between 1939 and 1945, the veteran was drafted or did enlist 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 the veteran was unable to resume his secondary education upon returning to civilian life.

6. **Fiscal Impact is indeterminate.** Impact is likely to be minimal, but has the potential to be significant if large numbers of veterans apply for the honorary diplomas.

7. **Budget amendment necessary:** No

8. **Fiscal implications:** It is not possible to determine with accuracy the cost of providing the special honorary diplomas to certain World War II veterans since it is not known exactly how many veterans meet the criteria for such diplomas or would apply.

U.S. government data as of 1994 indicated that there were 7.7 million living World War II veterans at that time, with 175,000 of them living in Virginia.

The Department of Education estimates that the cost of providing the honorary diploma could range between 50 cents and \$1.50 per diploma, depending on whether the department simply produces the diploma or also mails it to the veteran.

If only a few hundred veterans apply for the honorary diplomas, cost impact would be minimal for processing applications of veterans and printing and issuing the special honorary diplomas.

However, should thousands of veterans from across the country apply for the honorary diplomas, fiscal impact could potentially be significant enough that the department would have difficulty meeting the demand from within existing resources. If as many as one percent of the 7.7 million U.S. world War II veterans were to apply for the diplomas, cost could be as high as \$115,000.

The bill allows the special honorary diplomas to be awarded to any veteran in the U.S. who served between 1939 and 1945 and did not graduate from high school. The fiscal impact

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would be minimized if the bill restricted the special diplomas to veterans now living in Virginia, or who were attending a Virginia secondary school at the time they entered the Armed Forces.

9. Specific agency or political subdivisions affected: Department of Education

10. Technical amendment necessary: It is not clear from the language in the bill if the honorary diplomas are to be awarded only to living veterans, or if the families of deceased veterans can apply for diplomas to be awarded posthumously.

11. Other comments: None

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cc: Secretary of Education

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