

115TH CONGRESS
1ST SESSION

H. R. 3940

To amend title 38, United States Code, to provide for housing stipends and supply fee payments under the Post-9/11 Educational Assistance Program for individuals affected by extended school closures due to natural disasters.

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

OCTOBER 4, 2017

Mr. POE of Texas (for himself, Mr. AL GREEN of Texas, Mr. VELA, Ms. EDDIE BERNICE JOHNSON of Texas, Mr. BRADY of Texas, Mr. BISHOP of Georgia, Mr. CARTER of Texas, Mr. GENE GREEN of Texas, Mr. BABIN, Mr. VEASEY, Mr. BLUMENAUER, Mr. SCHRADER, Mr. WALDEN, Mr. GONZALEZ of Texas, Mr. O'ROURKE, Mr. SESSIONS, Mr. McCAUL, and Mr. RYAN of Ohio) introduced the following bill; which was referred to the Committee on Veterans' Affairs

A BILL

To amend title 38, United States Code, to provide for housing stipends and supply fee payments under the Post-9/11 Educational Assistance Program for individuals affected by extended school closures due to natural disasters.

1 *Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representa-*
2 *tives of the United States of America in Congress assembled,*

3 **SECTION 1. SHORT TITLE.**

4 This Act may be cited as the “Veterans Education
5 Disaster Assistance Act”.

1 **SEC. 2. EDUCATIONAL ASSISTANCE UNDER POST-9/11 EDU-**
2 **CATIONAL ASSISTANCE PROGRAM DURING**
3 **EXTENDED SCHOOL CLOSURES DUE TO NAT-**
4 **URAL DISASTERS.**

5 Section 3313 of title 38, United States Code, is
6 amended by adding at the end the following new sub-
7 section:

8 “(k) SCHOOL CLOSURE DURING NATURAL DISAS-
9 TERS.—

10 “(1) IN GENERAL.—An individual described in
11 paragraph (2) shall be entitled to the following:

12 “(A) A monthly stipend in the amount to
13 which the individual would be entitled were the
14 individual pursuing the course of education at
15 the institution of higher education.

16 “(B) An additional lump sum amount for
17 any books, supplies, equipment, and other edu-
18 cational costs necessary by reason of pursuing
19 the course solely by distance learning or replac-
20 ing the course with an alternative course of
21 education pursued solely by distance learning.

22 “(2) INDIVIDUAL DESCRIBED.—An individual
23 described in this paragraph is an individual pursuing
24 a course of education at an institution of higher edu-
25 cation using educational assistance under this chap-
26 ter who—

1 “(A) is forced to discontinue pursuing such
2 course at such institution by reason of a school
3 closure described under paragraph (4); and

4 “(B) opts to—

5 “(i) pursue that course of education
6 solely by distance learning; or

7 “(ii) pursue an alternative course of
8 education solely by distance learning.

9 “(3) DURATION.—The duration of the monthly
10 stipends payable to an individual under paragraph
11 (1)(A) shall be the shorter of the following:

12 “(A) The period of time necessary to com-
13 plete the quarter, semester, term or academic
14 period during which the school closure described
15 in paragraph (4) occurs.

16 “(B) Four months.

17 “(4) SCHOOL CLOSURE.—A school closure de-
18 scribed in this paragraph is the closure of an institu-
19 tion of higher education—

20 “(A) by reason of a natural disaster;

21 “(B) for a period of time that—

22 “(i) the institution confirms will last
23 for four weeks or longer; or

1 “(ii) the institution describes as in-
2 definite and that endures for a period of
3 four weeks or longer; and

4 “(C) that the Secretary confirms is covered
5 for purposes of this subsection.

6 “(5) NATURAL DISASTER DEFINED.—In this
7 subsection, the term ‘natural disaster’ means a spe-
8 cific weather event or earth process, including a hur-
9 ricane, tornados, wildfire or forest fire, earthquake,
10 avalanche, mudslide, hailstorm, thunderstorm, light-
11 ning storm, freeze, blizzard, sinkhole, or other disas-
12 trous event that occurs as a result of such an event
13 or process, that the President or the governor of a
14 State declares a natural disaster.

15 “(6) NO CHARGE TO ENTITLEMENT.—No addi-
16 tional charge shall be made to the entitlement of any
17 individual to educational assistance under this chap-
18 ter by reason of a payment under this subsection.”.

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