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## SENATE COMMITTEE ON APPROPRIATIONS

Senator Sabrina Cervantes, Chair  
2025 - 2026 Regular Session

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### **AB 2203 (Tangipa) - Public postsecondary education: priority registration: veterans and dependents of veterans: federal GI Bill**

**Version:** February 19, 2026

**Urgency:** No

**Hearing Date:** August 3, 2026

**Policy Vote:** ED. 7 - 0, M.&V.A. 4 - 0

**Mandate:** Yes

**Consultant:** Lenin Del Castillo

**Bill Summary:** This bill requires, commencing with the 2028-29 academic year, each campus of the California State University (CSU) and California Community Colleges (CCCs), and requests each campus of the University of California (UC) that administers a priority enrollment system, to grant priority to recipients of federal GI Bill benefits and recipients of the specified state fee waiver for military-connected students.

#### **Fiscal Impact:**

- The Chancellor's Office estimates one-time Proposition 98 General Fund costs of \$140,000 for community college districts to implement a new category of priority registration. The Chancellor's Office indicates that the number of veteran students that would qualify for the new category for priority enrollment is about 5,000.
- The costs to the UC and CSU are expected to be minor and absorbable. The UC indicates that the bill would add about 6,500 students to the existing priority registration list.

**Background:** Existing law requires the CSU and each community college district (CCD), and requests the UC, to grant priority registration for enrollment to a member or former member of the Armed Forces of the United States who is a resident of California and who has received an honorable discharge, a general discharge, or an other than honorable discharge, and to any member or former member of the State Guard, as specified, for any academic term attended at one of these institutions for 4 academic years after leaving state or federal active duty for use within 15 years of leaving state or federal active duty.

Existing law authorizes the CSU and each CCD, and requests the UC to offer priority registration to foster youth, former foster youth, homeless youth, or formerly homeless youth, as defined.

Existing law requires each CCD to offer priority registration to students eligible for disabled student programs and services, students eligible for extended opportunity programs and services, students receiving CalWORKs, and students who receive Tribal Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF) as defined.

Existing law requires each campus of the CSU and each CCD, and requests each campus of the UC, to offer priority registration to student parents.

**Proposed Law:** This bill requires, commencing with the 2028-29 academic year, each campus of the CSU and CCCs, and requests each campus of the UC that administers a priority enrollment system to grant priority for registration for enrollment to a student who is a recipient of the CalVet College Fee Waiver Program, including specified dependents of disabled or deceased veterans, eligible family members of California National Guard members killed or disabled in the line of duty, and Medal of Honor recipients and their children; and a student who is using any federal GI benefits.

**Related Legislation:** SB 892 (Grove, 2026) removes limitations on the duration and timing for which the CSU and community college districts are required, and the UC is requested, to grant priority registration for enrollment to a student who is a current or former member of the Armed Forces of the United States. SB 892 is pending in the Assembly Appropriations Committee.

**Staff Comments:** Existing law requires the CSU and CCCs, and requests the UC, to grant priority enrollment to several groups of students, including CSU California Promise students (CSU), current and former foster youth (CCCs, CSU, and UC), homeless youth (CCCs, CSU and UC), and any member or former member of the Armed Forces of the United States. Additionally, priority enrollment decisions are made at the campus level at each segment and allows specific students to access classes ahead of the general student population, such as continuing students. This bill adds to the list of groups specified in statute for which priority registration must be granted.

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