
SENATE COMMITTEE ON EDUCATION

Senator Sasha Renée Pérez, Chair

2025 - 2026 Regular

Bill No: AB 2794 **Hearing Date:** June 24, 2026
Author: Committee on Higher Education
Version: March 18, 2026
Urgency: No **Fiscal:** Yes
Consultant: Olgalilia Ramirez

Subject: Postsecondary education: nonresident tuition: exemption: federal GI Bill.

SUMMARY

This bill adds the Montgomery GI Bill Selected Reserve program to the list of federal education benefits that qualifies for exemption from paying nonresident tuition and specifies that this program and other federal programs as specified, as they read on January 5, 2026, are also authorized for this exemption. This is the annual higher education omnibus bill.

BACKGROUND

Existing law:

- 1) Establishes the University of California (UC) as a public trust to be administered by the Regents of the UC; and, grants the Regents full powers of organization and government, subject only to such legislative control as may be necessary to insure security of its funds, compliance with the terms of its endowments, statutory requirements around competitive bidding and contracts, sales of property and the purchase of materials, goods and services. (California Constitution Article IX, § (9)(a))
- 2) Establishes the Donahoe Higher Education Act, setting forth the mission of the UC, California State University (CSU), and California Community Colleges (CCC). (Education Code (EC) § 66010, et seq.)
- 3) Confers upon the CSU Trustees the powers, duties, and functions with respect to the management, administration, and control of the CSU system and provides that the Trustees are responsible for the rule of government of their appointees and employees. (EC §§ 66606 and 89500, et seq.)
- 4) Establishes the CCC under the administration of the Board of Governors of the CCC, as one of the segments of public postsecondary education in this state. The CCC shall be comprised of community college districts. (EC § 70900)
- 5) Establishes, effective for academic terms beginning on or after August 1, 2021, a student enrolled at a campus of the CCC or the CSU who meets all of the following requirements shall be exempt from paying nonresident tuition or any other fee that is exclusively applicable to nonresident students:

- a) The student resides in California.
- b) The student meets the definition of “covered individual,” as specified.
- c) The student is eligible for education benefits under the federal Montgomery GI Bill–Active Duty program, as specified, the Veterans Readiness and Employment program, as specified, the Post-9/11 GI Bill program, as specified, or the Survivors’ and Dependents’ Educational Assistance program, as specified, as each read on January 5, 2022. (EC § 68075.7)

ANALYSIS

This bill adds the Montgomery GI Bill–Selected Reserve program to the list of federal education benefits that qualifies for exemption from paying nonresident tuition, and specifies that this program and other federal programs, as specified, as they read on January 5, 2026, are also authorized for this exemption.

STAFF COMMENTS

- 1) **Need for the bill.** This bill is the annual higher education omnibus clean-up bill and proposes technical, non-controversial amendments to existing law. By tradition, if any affected agency, stakeholder group, the Department of Finance, or any of the four legislative caucuses objects to a provision in the bill or one that is being considered, that particular provision cannot be included.

Rationale for inclusion in the omnibus bill. This omnibus measure makes changes to the EC, below is the rationale for the change:

- a) Federal law, the Montgomery GI Bill Selected Reserves Tuition Fairness Act 2025, requires that states exempt students using this benefit from paying out-of-state tuition. This requirement goes into effect for terms beginning on or after August 1, 2026, and requires adding the Montgomery GI Bill–Selected Reserve program to the list of benefits that provide the Non-Resident Tuition Fee Waiver in California. To maintain compliance with federal law, this bill adds the Montgomery GI Bill–Selected Reserve program to the list of benefits that qualify a student for California’s nonresident tuition exemption.

SUPPORT

Faculty Association of California Community Colleges

OPPOSITION

None received