

BOARD OF REGENTS  
BRIEFING PAPER

*Handbook* Revision, Fee Waivers for Recipients of the Congressional Medal of Honor

September 7-8, 2023

**BACKGROUND & POLICY CONTEXT OF ISSUE:**

During the March 9-10, 2023, Board meeting, Regent Donald Sylvantee McMichael, Sr. requested a proposal to establish a fee waiver for recipients of the Congressional Medal of Honor to recognize and honor recipients that have been awarded the United States' highest award for military valor in action. During its June 8-9, 2023, meeting, the Board approved such fee waiver (*Title 4, Chapter 17, Section 15*). The provisions of the fee waiver for recipients of the Congressional Medal of Honor were written to be consistent with existing provisions of a fee waiver for recipients of the Purple Heart (*Title 4, Chapter 17, Section 14*), both in Board policy and NRS 396.5443.

Subsequently, during the 2023 Session of the Nevada State Legislature, new provisions were enacted under Assembly Bill 279 to expand the fee waiver for veteran recipients of the Purple Heart to include, under certain criteria, a child of such veteran. On June 30, 2023, the Board approved revisions of the Purple Heart fee waiver (*Title 4, Chapter 17, Section 14*) to align with AB 279. During that same meeting, Regent McMichael requested that a revision to the Congressional Medal of Honor fee waiver provisions (*Title 4, Chapter 17, Section 15*) be brought forward to align with the approved expansion of the Purple Heart fee waiver.

This proposed revision to the Congressional Medal of Honor fee waiver provisions is similar to the newest provisions of the Purple Heart fee waiver in terms of an expansion to include the child of a recipient of the medal. However, unlike the Purple Heart fee waiver, this proposal does not require the child of a recipient to be a graduate of a Nevada high school or for the parent and medal recipient to be a Nevada resident. This proposal is made in the spirit of honoring the nation's most valued U.S. military members and veterans who have received this recognition, along with their children. With the small number of Congressional Medal of Honor recipients in the nation—fewer than 100 are living and even fewer reside in Nevada—imposing a requirement to have a nexus to Nevada would honor very few, if any, children of Medal of Honor recipients.

**SPECIFIC ACTIONS BEING RECOMMENDED OR REQUESTED:**

Approve the proposed revision of *Title 4, Chapter 17, Section 15* to expand the Congressional Medal of Honor fee waiver to include a child of such recipient.

**IMPETUS (WHY NOW?):**

With the recent expansion of the Purple Heart fee waiver by the 82<sup>nd</sup> Session of the Nevada State Legislature to include a child of such recipient, and at the request of Regent Donald Sylvantee McMichael, Sr., a proposal is brought forward to also expand the Congressional Medal of Honor fee waiver (*Title 4, Chapter 17, Section 15*).

**CHECK THE NSHE STRATEGIC PLAN GOAL THAT IS SUPPORTED BY THIS REQUEST:**

- Access (Increase access to higher education)
- Success (Improve student success)
- Close Institutional Performance Gaps
- Workforce (Meet workforce needs in Nevada)
- Research (Increase solutions-focused research)
- Coordination, Accountability, and Transparency (Ensure system coordination, accountability, and transparency)
- Not Applicable to NSHE Strategic Plan Goals

**INDICATE HOW THE PROPOSAL SUPPORTS THE SPECIFIC STRATEGIC PLAN GOAL**

In general, this policy and revision supports the Board’s goals of access and success by widening the financial support available to certain veterans and children of such veterans.

**BULLET POINTS TO SUPPORT REQUEST/RECOMMENDATION:**

- This proposal is made in the spirit of honoring the nation’s most valued U.S. military members and veterans who have received this recognition, along with their children.
- To remain consistent with fee waiver provisions for our U.S. Armed Forces members and veterans, an expansion of the Congressional Medal of Honor fee waiver to include a child of such recipient is proposed.

**POTENTIAL ARGUMENTS AGAINST THE REQUEST/RECOMMENDATION:**

None have been presented.

**ALTERNATIVE(S) TO WHAT IS BEING REQUESTED/RECOMMENDED:**

None have been presented.

**RECOMMENDATION FROM THE CHANCELLOR’S OFFICE:**

The Chancellor’s Office supports the proposed policy revision.

**COMPLIANCE WITH BOARD POLICY:**

Consistent With Current Board Policy: Title # \_\_\_\_\_ Chapter # \_\_\_\_\_ Section # \_\_\_\_\_

Amends Current Board Policy: *Title 4, Chapter 17, Section 15*

Amends Current Procedures & Guidelines Manual: Chapter # \_\_\_\_\_ Section # \_\_\_\_\_

Other: \_\_\_\_\_

Fiscal Impact: Yes  No \_\_\_\_\_

Explain: while there will be a fiscal impact, the cost of implementing this policy depends upon the number of eligible students who choose to enroll at an NSHE institution, which cannot be accurately projected. According to the Congressional Medal of Honor Society, the repository for tracking Medal of Honor recipients, there are currently 65 living recipients as of the date of this proposal, and the number of children of an eligible age is likely to be minimal.

## POLICY PROPOSAL

### TITLE 4, CHAPTER 17, SECTION 15

#### Fee Waivers for Recipients of the Congressional Medal of Honor

Additions appear in *boldface italics*; deletions are ~~stricken~~ and bracketed]

#### Section 15. Fee Waivers for Recipients of the Congressional Medal of Honor

1. A member or veteran of the Armed Forces of the United States who is a recipient of the Congressional Medal of Honor *or a child of such a member or veteran* shall be permitted to register without registration fees, laboratory fees, or other mandatory fees provided that the student:
  - a. Completes the Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA); and
  - b. Provides a Certificate of Eligibility for Veterans Administration educational benefits and/or the Veterans Administration Vocational Rehabilitation & Employment benefit.
2. The waiver shall be granted to a student who enrolls in a program leading to a certificate, associate, bachelor's, master's, or professional degree.
3. A student to whom the fee waiver is awarded shall be deemed a bona fide resident of Nevada for tuition purposes.
4. The institution may request such documentation as it deems necessary to verify the student is a member or veteran of the Armed Forces of the United States and a recipient of the Congressional Medal of Honor *or the child of such military member or veteran*.
5. *An eligible child of a military member or veteran awarded the Congressional Medal of Honor may use the waiver:*
  - a. *For 10 years after the child reaches the age of 18; or*
  - b. *If the child enrolls at an institution prior to turning 18, for 10 years after the date of such enrollment.*
6. ~~[5.]~~The amount of the waiver must be equal to:
  - a. If a student is entitled to receive any federal educational benefit for a semester, the balance of registration fees, laboratory fees, and other mandatory fees assessed against the student that remain unpaid after the student's account has been credited with the full amount of the federal education benefits to which the student is entitled for that semester; or
  - b. If a student is not entitled to receive any federal education benefits for a semester, the full amount of the registration fees, laboratory fees, and any other mandatory fees assessed against the student for that semester.

7. [6.]Definitions.

- a. For purposes of this Section, other mandatory fees include student fees, special course fees, and differential program fees, as defined in this chapter.
- b. Federal education benefits include federal grants awarded to the student based on completion of the FAFSA, Veterans Administration education benefits and/or the Veterans Administration Vocational Rehabilitation and Employment benefit.