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THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF PENNSYLVANIA

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HOUSE BILL

No. 1689 Session of  
2015

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INTRODUCED BY SAYLOR, PHILLIPS-HILL, KIM, MILLARD, BISHOP,  
BAKER, ROZZI, BOBACK, THOMAS, CALTAGIRONE, BARRAR, TOEPEL,  
KINSEY, READSHAW, MACKENZIE, PICKETT, KLUNK, DRISCOLL, RAPP,  
D. COSTA, WATSON, A. HARRIS, REGAN, WARD, MOUL, DUSH,  
ORTITAY, COHEN AND BLOOM, NOVEMBER 12, 2015

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REFERRED TO COMMITTEE ON VETERANS AFFAIRS AND EMERGENCY  
PREPAREDNESS, NOVEMBER 12, 2015

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AN ACT

1 Amending Title 51 (Military Affairs) of the Pennsylvania  
2 Consolidated Statutes, providing for the National Guard Youth  
3 Challenge Program.

4 The General Assembly of the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania  
5 hereby enacts as follows:

6 Section 1. Title 51 of the Pennsylvania Consolidated  
7 Statutes is amended by adding a chapter to read:

8 CHAPTER 98

9 NATIONAL GUARD YOUTH

10 CHALLENGE PROGRAM

11 Sec.

12 9801. Definitions.

13 9802. Program established.

14 9803. Description of program.

15 9804. Length of program.

16 9805. Participants.

- 1 9806. Administration.
- 2 9807. Funding.
- 3 9808. Transferability of course credit.
- 4 9809. Advisory council.
- 5 9810. Report.
- 6 9811. Audit required.
- 7 § 9801. Definitions.

8 As used in this chapter, the following words and phrases  
9 shall have the meanings given to them in this section, unless  
10 the context clearly indicates otherwise:

11 "Institution of higher education." Any institution of higher  
12 learning that is approved by the Pennsylvania Higher Education  
13 Assistance Agency to participate in the award of State grants  
14 under the act of January 25, 1966 (1965 P.L.1546, No.541),  
15 referred to as the Higher Education Scholarship Law.

16 "Program." The National Guard Youth Challenge Program.

17 "School entity." A school district, charter school, cyber  
18 charter school, regional charter school, intermediate unit or  
19 area vocational-technical school.

20 § 9802. Program established.

21 To the extent funds are appropriated for the purposes  
22 provided under this chapter, the department shall establish a  
23 youth challenge program as provided for under 32 U.S.C. § 509  
24 (relating to National Guard Youth Challenge Program of  
25 opportunities for civilian youth). The program shall be known as  
26 the Keystone State Challenge Academy.

27 § 9803. Description of program.

28 Consistent with 32 U.S.C. § 509(a) (relating to National  
29 Guard Youth Challenge Program of opportunities for civilian  
30 youth), the program shall seek to improve the life skills and

1 employment potential of participants by providing military-based  
2 training and supervised work experience, together with the core  
3 program components of assisting participants to receive a high  
4 school diploma or its equivalent, leadership development,  
5 promoting fellowship and community service, developing life  
6 coping skills and job skills, and improving physical fitness and  
7 health and hygiene.

8 § 9804. Length of program.

9 The program shall be for a period of time as set forth in 32  
10 U.S.C. § 509(a) (relating to National Guard Youth Challenge  
11 Program of opportunities for civilian youth).

12 § 9805. Participants.

13 Requirements for participation in the program shall be as  
14 prescribed by the United States Secretary of Defense under 32  
15 U.S.C. § 509(e) (relating to National Guard Youth Challenge  
16 Program of opportunities for civilian youth).

17 § 9806. Administration.

18 Subject to 32 U.S.C. § 509 (relating to National Guard Youth  
19 Challenge Program of opportunities for civilian youth) and its  
20 implementing regulations and applicable agreements, the program  
21 shall be staffed by the administrative, professional, technical  
22 and clerical employees necessary for the operation of the  
23 program.

24 § 9807. Funding.

25 The department shall apply for funding, as provided for under  
26 32 U.S.C. § 509(d) (relating to National Guard Youth Challenge  
27 Program of opportunities for civilian youth). Pursuant to 32  
28 U.S.C. § 509(j), the department may supplement such funding with  
29 other resources, including gifts, made available to the  
30 department and may also accept, use and dispose of gifts or

1 donations of money, other property or services for the program.

2 § 9808. Transferability of course credit.

3 All academic course credits earned by a program participant

4 shall be recognized by any school entity in which the

5 participant enrolls following completion of the program. The

6 department, in consultation with the Department of Education,

7 shall ensure that the program complies with all statutory and

8 regulatory provisions as necessary to facilitate the

9 transferability of course credit earned in the program to a

10 school entity.

11 § 9809. Advisory council.

12 (a) Establishment.--There is established an advisory council

13 for the program. The advisory council shall consist of the

14 following members and the Adjutant General, who shall serve as a

15 nonvoting, ex officio member. Members of the advisory council

16 shall be appointed as follows:

17 (1) Three members appointed by the Governor as follows:

18 (i) The Deputy Adjutant General, Army, or a

19 designee.

20 (ii) The Deputy Adjutant General, Air, or a

21 designee.

22 (iii) The Secretary of Education or a designee.

23 (2) Three members of the Senate appointed by the

24 President pro tempore of the Senate, in consultation with the

25 Majority Leader and Minority Leader of the Senate, with two

26 appointees from the majority party and one appointee from the

27 minority party.

28 (3) Three members of the House of Representatives

29 appointed by the Speaker of the House of Representatives, in

30 consultation with the Majority Leader and Minority Leader of

1 the House of Representatives, with two appointees from the  
2 majority party and one appointee from the minority party.

3 (b) Terms.--Each member of the advisory council shall serve  
4 for the duration of the term of the appointing authority,  
5 provided that each member may be removed for cause by the  
6 member's appointing authority.

7 (c) Chairperson.--The advisory council shall annually elect  
8 a chairperson.

9 (d) Quorum.--Five members of the advisory council shall  
10 constitute a quorum for the purpose of conducting the business  
11 of the advisory council. The advisory council shall meet at  
12 least quarterly and at other times at the call of the  
13 chairperson.

14 (e) Compensation.--Members of the advisory council shall  
15 receive no compensation for their services but shall receive  
16 reimbursement for their necessary and proper expenses for  
17 attendance at meetings.

18 (f) Program operation.--The advisory council shall advise  
19 the Adjutant General and the department concerning the operation  
20 of the program.

21 § 9810. Report.

22 The department shall submit annually to the chairperson and  
23 minority chairperson of the Education Committee of the Senate  
24 and the chairperson and minority chairperson of the Veterans  
25 Affairs and Emergency Preparedness Committee of the Senate and  
26 the chairperson and minority chairperson of the Education  
27 Committee of the House of Representatives and the chairperson  
28 and minority chairperson of the Veterans Affairs and Emergency  
29 Preparedness Committee of the House of Representatives a written  
30 report concerning the program. The report shall include, but not

1 be limited to, all of the following:

2 (1) The number of individuals who applied to the program  
3 in the previous fiscal year.

4 (2) The number of individuals who participated in the  
5 program in the previous fiscal year.

6 (3) The number and percentage of program participants in  
7 the previous fiscal year who achieved each of the following:

8 (i) Earned a high school diploma or its equivalent.

9 (ii) Enrolled in a course of study at an institution  
10 of higher education.

11 (iii) Accepted a position of full-time, paid  
12 employment.

13 (iv) Accepted a position of part-time, paid  
14 employment.

15 (v) Entered the Armed Forces of the United States,  
16 including a reserve component or the National Guard.

17 (4) The demographic makeup of the applicants to, and  
18 participants in, the program, including, but not limited to,  
19 the following:

20 (i) Race.

21 (ii) Age.

22 (iii) Gender.

23 (5) Any information the department provides to the  
24 Secretary of Defense under 32 U.S.C. § 509(k) (relating to  
25 National Guard Youth Challenge Program of opportunities for  
26 civilian youth).

27 § 9811. Audit required.

28 The department shall submit annually to the chairperson and  
29 minority chairperson of the Veterans Affairs and Emergency  
30 Preparedness Committee of the Senate and the chairperson and

1 minority chairperson of the Veterans Affairs and Emergency  
2 Preparedness Committee of the House of Representatives a  
3 complete certified audit of the program. The audit shall be  
4 conducted by a qualified independent certified public accountant  
5 under generally accepted audit standards of the Governmental  
6 Accounting Standards Board.

7       Section 2. This act shall take effect immediately.