SENATE BILL 37:
Waive Tuition/Fallen Officer Was Guardian

2015-2016 General Assembly

Committee:	House Appropriations	**Date:**	September 29, 2015
Introduced by:	Sens. Smith, Apodaca	**Prepared by:**	Denise Adams
Analysis of:	PCS to Second Edition S37-CSTB-31		Legislative Analyst

SUMMARY: Senate Bill 37 would require UNC campuses and North Carolina community colleges to waive tuition for children whose legal guardians and legal custodians are law enforcement officers, firefighters, volunteer firefighters, or rescue squad workers who are killed as a direct result of traumatic injury sustained in the line of duty or are permanently and totally disabled as a direct result of a traumatic injury sustained in the line of duty. Senate Bill 37 also clarifies that the guardianship and custodian relationships must be verified by an order from a court proceeding, and makes several technical changes.

The PCS changes the effective date to make the bill applicable beginning with the 2016 spring semester.

[As introduced, this bill was identical to H19, as introduced by Rep. C. Graham, which is currently in Senate Education/Higher Education.]

CURRENT LAW: Chapter 115B of the General Statutes requires campuses of The University of North Carolina and the North Carolina community colleges to waive tuition for certain individuals, including:

- Survivors of law enforcement officers, firefighters, volunteer firefighters, or rescue squad workers killed as direct result of a traumatic injury sustained in the line of duty. The definition of "survivor" is an individual whose parent or spouse: (i) was a law enforcement officer, a firefighter, a volunteer firefighter, or a rescue squad worker, (ii) was killed while in active service or training for active service or died as a result of a service-connected disability, and (iii) at the time of active service or training was a North Carolina resident.
- Spouses of law enforcement officers, firefighters, volunteer firefighters, or rescue squad workers permanently and totally disabled as a direct result of a traumatic injury sustained in the line of duty.
- Any child, if the child is at least 17 years old but not yet 24 years old, whose parent is a law enforcement officer, firefighter, volunteer firefighter, or rescue squad worker who is permanently and totally disabled as a direct result of a traumatic injury sustained in the line of duty.

The relationships are verified by birth certificates or marriage certificates or other documentary evidence deemed appropriate by the institution.

BILL ANALYSIS: Senate Bill 37 would require UNC campuses and North Carolina community colleges to waive tuition for children whose legal guardians and legal custodians are law enforcement officers, firefighters, volunteer firefighters, or rescue squad workers who are killed as a direct result of

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traumatic injury sustained in the line of duty or are permanently and totally disabled as a direct result of a traumatic injury sustained in the line of duty. Senate Bill 37 would also provide that the guardianship and custodian relationships must be verified by an order from a court proceeding rather than evidence deemed appropriate by the institution. Senate Bill 37 also makes several technical changes to fix incorrect cross-references in the relevant statutes.

EFFECTIVE DATE: The PCS would become effective when it becomes law and would apply beginning with the 2016 spring academic semester.

**Drupti Chauhan, Committee Counsel to Senate Education, substantially contributed to this summary.*