

SENATE, No. 2816

STATE OF NEW JERSEY
219th LEGISLATURE

INTRODUCED AUGUST 13, 2020

Sponsored by:

Senator VIN GOPAL

District 11 (Monmouth)

Senator JOSEPH PENNACCHIO

District 26 (Essex, Morris and Passaic)

Co-Sponsored by:

Senators Brown and Diegnan

SYNOPSIS

Requires DMVA to partner with National Guard Association of New Jersey to offer State-sponsored life insurance for members of New Jersey National Guard.

CURRENT VERSION OF TEXT

As introduced.



(Sponsorship Updated As Of: 8/20/2020)

1 **AN ACT** concerning State-sponsored life insurance for members of
2 the New Jersey National Guard and supplementing Title 38A of
3 the New Jersey Statutes.

4
5 **BE IT ENACTED** *by the Senate and General Assembly of the State*
6 *of New Jersey:*

7
8 1. The Legislature finds and declares that:

9 a. The National Guard is the most crucial line of mainland
10 defense for the United States of America.

11 b. The National Guard of New Jersey consists of over 8,300
12 servicemembers dedicated to the protection of the State of New
13 Jersey, the United States, and the rest of the world.

14 c. The New Jersey Department of Military and Veterans Affairs
15 is committed to caring for the servicemembers of the National Guard
16 and their families.

17 d. Despite this commitment to the servicemembers of the New
18 Jersey National Guard, there is currently no low-cost State-sponsored
19 life insurance benefit for the members and their families.

20 e. There have been several perceived federal legal and ethical
21 issues associated with a State-sponsored life insurance benefit for
22 National Guard servicemembers.

23 f. However, the United States Congress has provided in 37
24 U.S.C. 707 that the Secretary of the Army or the Secretary of the Air
25 Force, as the case may be, may allow a member of the National Guard
26 to make allotments from his or her pay for the payment of premiums
27 under a group life insurance program sponsored by the military
28 department of the state in which such member holds his or her
29 National Guard membership or by the National Guard Association of
30 such state.

31 g. The United States Secretary of Defense has provided by
32 regulation in Section 3-209 of the Department of Defense Directive
33 5500.07-R that offering group life insurance programs sponsored by
34 a state military department, to the same extent and similar manner as
35 the offering of the Servicemembers Group Life Insurance program,
36 is not an endorsement of a non-federal entity in violation of said
37 regulation.

38 h. Members of the New Jersey National Guard should be
39 provided with the opportunity to purchase low-cost New Jersey
40 National Guard State-sponsored life insurance products.

41 i. Therefore, it is desirable for members of the New Jersey
42 National Guard to have access to low-cost life insurance in addition
43 to the Servicemembers Group Life Insurance program currently
44 offered to all service members.

45
46 2. a. The National Guard Association of New Jersey shall be the
47 designated provider of State-sponsored life insurance products
48 offered through insurers licensed to transact insurance business in

1 New Jersey for military members and dependents of the New Jersey
2 National Guard. The life insurance products provided by the
3 National Guard Association of New Jersey through its membership
4 in the Militia Insurance Trust shall be known as the “New Jersey
5 National Guard State-Sponsored Life Insurance Program.”

6 b. The Department of Military and Veterans Affairs, through the
7 Adjutant General, is hereby designated as the official departmental
8 sponsor of the “New Jersey National Guard State-Sponsored Life
9 Insurance Program,” and shall allow, facilitate, and coordinate all
10 efforts to make the program available to all members of the New
11 Jersey National Guard, and shall allow, facilitate, and coordinate
12 requested allotments with the appropriate United States Property and
13 Fiscal Office.

14
15 3. This act shall take effect immediately.
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18 STATEMENT 19

20 This bill requires the New Jersey Department of Military and
21 Veterans Affairs (DMVA) to partner with the National Guard
22 Association of New Jersey (NGANJ) to offer State-sponsored life
23 insurance for the New Jersey National Guard (NJNG).

24 The NJNG currently consists of over 8,300 dedicated
25 servicemembers committed to protecting New Jersey, the United
26 States, and the rest of the world. Members of the National Guard live
27 in the community and are ready to assist civilian emergency
28 management before, during, and after emergency situations. New
29 Jersey is committed to caring for the servicemembers and families of
30 the National Guard.

31 Currently, members of the NJNG do not benefit from a low-cost
32 State-sponsored life insurance program. This is due to several
33 perceived federal legal and ethical issues associated with a State-
34 sponsored life insurance benefit for National Guard servicemembers.
35 However, the United States Congress has provided that a member of
36 the National Guard may enroll in a group life insurance program
37 sponsored by the military department of the state in which such
38 member holds his or her National Guard membership or by the
39 National Guard Association of such state.

40 This bill designates the NGANJ the provider of State-sponsored
41 life insurance products offered through insurers licensed to transact
42 insurance business in New Jersey for military members and
43 dependents of the NJNG. The program will be known as the “New
44 Jersey National Guard State-Sponsored Life Insurance Program.”
45 The DMVA, through the Adjutant General, is designated as the
46 official departmental sponsor of the program. The department will
47 allow, facilitate, and coordinate all efforts to make the program
48 available to all members of the NJNG, and will allow, facilitate, and

S2816 GOPAL, PENNACCHIO

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- 1 coordinate requested allotments with the appropriate United States
- 2 Property and Fiscal Office. This bill will not add any fiscal
- 3 responsibility for the State.