

**LEGISLATIVE EDUCATION STUDY COMMITTEE  
BILL ANALYSIS**

**Bill Number:** SB 476a

**50th Legislature, 1st Session, 2011**

**Tracking Number:** .185092.1

**Short Title:** No College Credits Needed for State Police

**Sponsor(s):** Senator Phil A. Griego

**Analyst:** James Ball

**Date:** March 22, 2011

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**AS AMENDED**

**The House Judiciary Committee amendments allow two years of military or law enforcement service to substitute for the required 60 hours of college credit.**

**Original Bill Summary:**

SB 476 amends current law enforcement provisions related to the entrance qualifications for New Mexico state police officers to remove:

- the requirement that candidates complete 60 hours of college credit; and
- the option of the Chief of State Police to appoint a candidate with at least 30 hours of college credit and require an additional 30 hours of college credit to be completed after appointment.

**Fiscal Impact:**

SB 476 does not contain an appropriation.

**Substantive Issues:**

According to the analysis of SB 476 by the Department of Public Safety, the department has had significant recruitment and retention issues because of the provisions in current law.

**Background:**

In other states, education qualifications for candidates to become state police officers include:

- **New Jersey** must have either a four-year bachelor's degree, have completed two years or 60 credits of college with two years of employment, or have completed 30 credits of college and two years of active-duty military service with an honorable discharge.
- **Arizona** must have a high school diploma or General Educational Development (GED) certificate at time of application and take a written, 100-question, multiple choice test.

- **Colorado** must have a high school diploma or GED.
- **Texas** must have an approved associate degree or a minimum of 90 semester hours from an accredited college or university, except that prior law enforcement or military experience at the following ratios may substitute for required semester hours, as follows:

Semester Hours		Law Enforcement/Military
0-15	Plus	36 months or more
16-30	Plus	30 months or more
31-45	Plus	24 months or more
46-59	Plus	18 months or more
60-74	Plus	12 months or more
75-89	Plus	6 months or more

Applicants substituting law enforcement or military experience for the college hour requirement must, at a minimum have obtained a GED or have graduated from high school.

**Related Bills:**

None.