

HOUSE BILL REPORT

SSB 6086

*As Passed House - Amended
March 3, 1992*

Title: An act relating to the advisory committee of the department of veterans affairs.

Brief Description: Changing provisions relating to the veterans affairs advisory committee.

Sponsor(s): By Senate Committee on Governmental Operations (originally sponsored by Senators McCaslin, M. Kreidler, Oke and Bauer; by request of Department of Veterans Affairs).

Brief History:

Reported by House Committee on:
State Government, February 26, 1992, DPA;
Passed House, March 3, 1992, 96-0.

**HOUSE COMMITTEE ON
STATE GOVERNMENT**

Majority Report: *Do pass as amended.* Signed by 10 members: Representatives Anderson, Chair; Pruitt, Vice Chair; McLean, Ranking Minority Member; Bowman, Assistant Ranking Minority Member; Chandler; R. Fisher; Grant; Moyer; O'Brien; and Sheldon.

Staff: Linda May (786-7135).

Background: The Veterans Affairs Advisory Committee serves in an advisory capacity to the governor and to the director of the Department of Veterans Affairs on all matters pertaining to the department. Members are appointed to the committee by the governor. Currently there are 15 members on the advisory committee, with the composition as follows: two veterans at large, one of whom is a Vietnam veteran; one representative from the Soldiers' Home and Colony at Orting; one representative from the Veterans' Home at Retsil; and one representative from each of 11 specified veterans organizations.

Summary of Bill: The Veterans Affairs Advisory Committee is expanded from 15 to 17 members. There continues to be representation from the Soldiers' Home at Orting and the Veterans' Home at Retsil. There are to be two veterans at large on the advisory committee. The remaining 13 members

are to represent congressionally-chartered veterans organizations. However, rather than specifying the particular organizations to be represented on the advisory committee, the composition of this portion of the committee is to be determined as follows: there is to be one representative from each of the three veterans organizations with the largest number of active members in the state; the remaining 10 members will be chosen to represent organizations having at least one active chapter in the state. No organization is to have more than one official representative on the advisory committee at any one time.

The bill provides a mechanism for veterans organizations to nominate individuals for appointment consideration. In making appointments to the advisory committee, the governor is to consider the recommendations of the veterans organizations. The governor is also to consider representation on the committee of various parts of the state and of the viewpoints of minority and women veterans.

Fiscal Note: Not requested.

Effective Date: Ninety days after adjournment of session in which bill is passed.

Testimony For: The Department of Veterans Affairs and a number of veterans' organizations are in support of this bill as well as the House version. The bill will lead to a substantial improvement in the operation of the advisory committee. The new member selection process is reasonable and sensible. Many major organizations are preempted from participating on the advisory committee now; the changes offered in this bill will allow these organizations to participate.

Testimony Against: None.

Witnesses: Ron Hoffman, Department of Veterans Affairs; and Keith Sherman, Veterans Legislative Coalition (both in favor).