

HOUSE BILL REPORT

SHB 1325

As Amended by the Senate

Title: An act relating to the joint committee on veterans' and military affairs.

Brief Description: Creating a joint committee on veterans' and military affairs.

Sponsors: By House Committee on State Government (originally sponsored by Representatives D. Schmidt, Conway, Haigh, Bush, Talcott, Romero, Mielke, Anderson, Rockefeller, Campbell and Wood; by request of Joint Select Committee on Veterans' and Military Affairs).

Brief History:

Committee Activity:

State Government: 2/7/01, 2/26/01 [DPS].

Floor Activity:

Passed House: 3/13/01, 94-0.

Senate Amended.

Passed Senate: 4/11/01, 47-0.

Brief Summary of Substitute Bill

- Creates the Joint Committee on Veterans' and Military Affairs.

HOUSE COMMITTEE ON STATE GOVERNMENT

Majority Report: The substitute bill be substituted therefor and the substitute bill do pass. Signed by 8 members: Representatives McMorris, Republican Co-Chair; Romero, Democratic Co-Chair; Miloscia, Democratic Vice Chair; Schindler, Republican Vice Chair; Haigh, Lambert, McDermott and D. Schmidt.

Staff: Jim Morishima (786-7191).

Background:

A variety of military personnel reside in Washington including veterans, active military personnel, members of the National Guard, and members of the reserve. A variety of state agencies handle issues relating to military personnel including the Military Department and the Department of Veterans Affairs.

Last year, the Joint Select Committee on Veterans' and Military Affairs (JSCVMA) was created. The purpose of the committee was to examine and define issues and make recommendations with respect to desirable changes in programs, laws, and administrative practices affecting veterans and military affairs. The committee consisted of 16 members, eight from the House and eight from the Senate. Because it was created by concurrent resolution, the JSCVMA ceased to exist after the last biennium.

Summary of Bill:

The Joint Committee on Veterans' and Military Affairs (JCVMA) is created. The committee must study issues relating to veterans, active military forces, the National Guard, the Reserves, the Military Department, and the Department of Veterans Affairs. The JCVMA must make recommendations to the Legislature regarding these issues and may create subcommittees to perform its duties.

The JCVMA consists of 16 members, four members from each caucus in the House appointed by the Speaker (or Co-Speakers) of the House, and four members from each caucus in the Senate appointed by the President of the Senate. The committee shall establish a four-member executive committee and may adopt rules and procedures for its orderly operation.

The committee terminates December 31, 2005.

EFFECT OF SENATE AMENDMENT(S):

All state agencies (including institutions of higher education), counties, cities, and towns must display the National League of Families' POW/MIA flag on (1) Armed Forces Day, (2) Memorial Day, (3) Flag Day, (4) Independence Day, (5) National POW/MIA Recognition Day, and (6) Veterans' Day. The Governor's Veterans Affairs Advisory Committee must provide information to the entities required to display the flag upon request.

Appropriation: None.

Fiscal Note: Not Requested.

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

Testimony For: This committee has great value to the Legislature and should be put into statute. Members of the military, veterans, and their families make up 40 percent of our state population. This committee helps us deal with issues that affect these people. The committee has also helped legislators get familiar with the military, and provides a direct

line of communication and information with the Legislature.

Testimony Against: None.

Testified: Representative Schmidt, co-prime sponsor; Representative Conway co-prime sponsor; Adjutant General Lowenberg, Military Department; and John Lee, Department of Veteran's Affairs.