

HOUSE BILL REPORT

HB 2546

As Reported by House Committee On:
State Government Operations & Accountability

Title: An act relating to the definition of veteran.

Brief Description: Concerning the definition of veteran.

Sponsors: Representatives Haigh, Nixon, Conway, Morrell, Bailey, Campbell, McCoy, Green, Rodne, Springer, McCune, Kilmer, Moeller and P. Sullivan.

Brief History:

Committee Activity:

State Government Operations & Accountability: 1/18/06, 1/20/06 [DPS].

Brief Summary of Substitute Bill

- Updates the definition of veteran to exclude the benefit pertaining to restrictions on sending veterans or their families to almshouses.
- Repeals RCW 73.08.060 (restrictions on sending veterans or their families to almshouses) from the statute.

HOUSE COMMITTEE ON STATE GOVERNMENT OPERATIONS & ACCOUNTABILITY

Majority Report: The substitute bill be substituted therefor and the substitute bill do pass. Signed by 8 members: Representatives Haigh, Chair; Green, Vice Chair; Clements, Assistant Ranking Minority Member; Hunt, McDermott, Miloscia, Schindler and Sump.

Staff: Kasa Tupua (786-7291).

Background:

Washington's statutes define "veteran" in two ways, one of which governs the eligibility for programs such as retirement benefits, tuition exemption, and credit for military services.

The second, broader definition governs eligibility requirements for various benefits for veterans that include the following:

- armed forces license plate collection;
- admission to a state veterans' home;
- veterans' scoring preference on civil service exams;
- free license plates for disabled veterans and prisoners of war;

- county assistance to indigent veterans and families;
 - restrictions on sending veterans or their families to almshouses;
 - county burial of indigent deceased veterans; or
 - a tax levy for the Veteran's Assistance Fund.
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Summary of Substitute Bill:

The definition of veteran is modified to remove the reference to the provision that restricts sending veterans or their families to almshouses. This provision, RCW 73.08.060, is repealed from the statute.

Substitute Bill Compared to Original Bill:

The reference to the provision that restricts sending veterans or their families to almshouses is repealed from the statute. This reference was removed from the definition of "veteran," and also is repealed from state statute.

Appropriation: None.

Fiscal Note: Not requested.

Effective Date of Substitute Bill: The bill takes effect 90 days after adjournment of session in which bill is passed.

Testimony For: Removing the provision that restricts sending veterans or their families to almshouses takes the ambiguity out of the statute, and helps to clarify the definition of veteran.

Testimony Against: None.

Persons Testifying: Gary "Frosty" Hulsey, Veterans of Foreign Wars.

Persons Signed In To Testify But Not Testifying: None.