
**State Government Operations &
Accountability Committee**

HB 2754

Brief Description: Creating the veterans innovations program.

Sponsors: Representatives Morrell, Campbell, Green, Haigh, Appleton, Kilmer, Darneille, Cox, Ormsby, Haler, Chase, P. Sullivan, McCoy, Wallace, Sells, Serben, Curtis, Moeller, Blake, Cody, Kenney, Conway, Ericks, Clibborn, Kessler, Simpson and Linville.

Brief Summary of Bill

- Creates the Veterans Innovations Program (VIP) for the purpose of providing veterans who served in recent military action with crisis and emergency relief, as well as education, training, and employment assistance.
- Makes a one time appropriation of \$10 million dollars, or as much thereof as may be needed, from the General Fund to the Department of Veterans Affairs for the creation and administration of the VIP.
- Terminates the VIP on June 30, 2016.

Hearing Date: 1/18/06

Staff: Kathryn Leathers (786-7114).

Background:

The Department of Veterans Affairs provides a variety of services to veterans, including assistance with finding employment, submitting entitlement claims, managing long-term health care, obtaining counseling for post-traumatic stress syndrome, and addressing a variety of other needs specific to veterans.

Summary of Bill:

The Veterans Innovations Program (VIP) is created within the Department of Veterans Affairs (Department). The purpose of the VIP is to provide assistance, in addition to that offered by the Department, to those veterans who have returned to their families and communities after serving in recent military action. The VIP provides assistance to veterans in a variety of areas, including crisis and emergency needs, family and community reunification, employment, education, and health.

A seven-member board is created to administer the VIP. The members are appointed by the Governor, must have recognized experience in serving veterans and their families in the areas targeted by the VIP, and may not participate in any board decision that would create a direct or indirect conflict of interest for that board member.

The board must establish a competitive process to solicit proposals for project applications, and it must also establish a peer review committee to provide an independent review of all proposals submitted that are determined to be competitive. The board may receive gifts, grants, or endowments from public or private sources.

An appropriation of \$10 million dollars, or as much thereof as may be necessary, is made from the General Fund to the Department for the biennium ending June 30, 2007. The VIP will be terminated on June 30, 2016.

Appropriation: None.

Fiscal Note: Available.

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