
State Government & Tribal Affairs
Committee

HB 1429

Brief Description: Consolidating veterans' programs and benefits into one title.

Sponsors: Representatives Anderson, Finn, Bailey, Hurst and Kelley.

Brief Summary of Bill

- Recodifies and reorganizes statutes pertaining to veterans into a new chapter in Title 73 RCW.

Hearing Date: 2/14/11

Staff: Marsha Reilly (786-7135).

Background:

The Department of Veterans Affairs (DVA) was created in 1975 and provides many services to veterans and their families, including medical care, assistance with claims for benefits, estate management, counseling, and financial assistance. The DVA also assists veterans with education, training and employment. Various other programs exist to provide assistance to veterans, such as rehabilitation programs, and provision of veterans' homes. Veterans also receive tuition waivers for higher education, scholarships, scoring preference for purposes of employment, and other such benefits in recognition of their military service.

Summary of Bill:

The following chapters of RCW are recodified under a new chapter in Title 73 RCW:

- chapter 43.60A RCW, pertaining to the Department of Veterans' Affairs;
 - chapter 43.61 RCW, pertaining to the Veterans' Rehabilitation Council;
 - chapter 72.36 RCW, pertaining to soldiers' and veterans' homes and veterans' cemetery;
- and

This analysis was prepared by non-partisan legislative staff for the use of legislative members in their deliberations. This analysis is not a part of the legislation nor does it constitute a statement of legislative intent.

- chapter 84.39 RCW, pertaining to property tax exemptions for widows or widowers of veterans

The following statutes relating to veterans' programs, benefits, services, and requirements are recodified under a new chapter in Title 73 RCW:

- admission of veterans who graduated from law school and then served in World War II to the Washington State Bar Association;
- consideration of veterans' disability pensions or regular compensation for disability for purposes of child support;
- educational activities in observance of Veterans' Day;
- World War II oral history project;
- conditional scholarship program;
- higher education tuition waivers for veterans and National Guard members;
- higher education operating fees revenue waiver for veterans;
- legislative jurisdiction between the United States and the state of Washington for veterans hospitals;
- definitions of "veteran" for various benefits;
- veterans' scoring preference;
- retirement credit for military service;
- public records exemption for veterans' discharge papers;
- veterans conservation corps
- veteran homeownership down payment assistance program;
- various special license plates and license plate emblems for veterans and members of the armed forces;
- armed forces drivers' licenses to remain valid while serving;
- wounded combat veterans internship program within the Department of Transportation;
- state supplement to national program of supplemental security income for World War II Philippine veterans;
- veterans' disability lifeline benefits;
- tax exemption for sale of cigarettes to military exchanges and commissaries, U.S. Veterans' Administration or authorized purchaser;
- high school diplomas for certain veterans;
- alternative route programs for high school graduation for eligible veterans;
- participation in outreach activities to increase the number of veteran tuition waivers by institutions of higher education;
- providing veteran's preference for purposes of layoff and reemployment under civil service law;
- adoption of rules by the Washington Personnel Resources Board regarding veteran's preference;
- eligible veterans and National Guard members as target population for workforce education under the green economy jobs growth initiative;
- adoption of rules to afford larger numbers of veteran contractors to compete for contracts with the Department of Transportation;
- certification by the Department of Veterans Affairs that a deceased person is a veteran eligible for interment at a federal or state veterans' cemetery;
- reduction in hunting license fees for veterans; and
- no fees for eligible veterans for state park fees.

The Code Reviser is directed to prepare a bill for introduction next session to correct cross references to the applicable sections of statute.

Appropriation: None.

Fiscal Note: Not requested.

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