

HOUSE BILL REPORT

HB 2287

As Reported by House Committee On: Judiciary

Title: An act relating to providing credit towards child support obligations for veterans benefits.

Brief Description: Providing credit towards child support obligations for veterans benefits.

Sponsors: Representatives Goodman, Dickerson, Kagi, Orwall, Kenney, Moeller, Kelley, Moscoso and Roberts.

Brief History:

Committee Activity:

Judiciary: 1/16/12, 1/19/12 [DP].

Brief Summary of Bill

- Requires that when an obligated parent's Veteran's Administration (VA) benefits are apportioned by the VA, the apportioned amounts are applied toward the satisfaction of the parent's child support obligation.

HOUSE COMMITTEE ON JUDICIARY

Majority Report: Do pass. Signed by 11 members: Representatives Pedersen, Chair; Goodman, Vice Chair; Shea, Assistant Ranking Minority Member; Eddy, Hansen, Kirby, Klippert, Nealey, Orwall, Rivers and Roberts.

Staff: Trudes Tango (786-7384).

Background:

Veteran's Administration (VA) benefits generally may not be garnished. However, the VA may apportion a veteran's benefits to the veteran's dependent children if the veteran is not paying his or her child support obligation. A veteran may also voluntarily have the VA apportion his or her VA benefits to the person's children.

When the Social Security Administration pays Social Security disability dependency benefits, retirement benefits, or survivor's benefits on behalf of a child of a disabled, retired,

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or deceased person, those benefits are credited towards the parent's child support obligations for the period for which benefits are paid. A similar provision exists giving a credit to the parent when worker's compensation benefits are paid by the Department of Labor and Industries on behalf of or on account of the parent's children.

Currently, there is no statute authorizing the Division of Child Support to grant credit to an obligor parent for the amounts of the VA benefits that are apportioned by the VA to go towards the parent's dependent children.

Summary of Bill:

When the VA apportions a veteran's benefits to pay child support on behalf of or on account of the veteran's children, the amount paid for the children will be treated as if the veteran paid the benefits toward the satisfaction of his or her child support obligation for the period for which benefits are paid.

Appropriation: None.

Fiscal Note: Available.

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

Staff Summary of Public Testimony:

(In support) Veterans are being charged twice. This bill is a matter of equality. The same requirement applies in Social Security benefit cases. The Division of Child Support will have to have a mechanism to determine the amount to be credited to the obligor.

(Opposed) None.

Persons Testifying: David Stillman, Department of Social and Health Services.

Persons Signed In To Testify But Not Testifying: None.