

SENATE BILL REPORT

HB 2287

As Reported by Senate Committee On:
Human Services & Corrections, February 23, 2012

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: Passed House: 2/09/12, 97-0.

Committee Activity: Human Services & Corrections: 2/17/12, 2/23/12 [DP].

SENATE COMMITTEE ON HUMAN SERVICES & CORRECTIONS

Majority Report: Do pass.

Signed by Senators Hargrove, Chair; Regala, Vice Chair; Stevens, Ranking Minority Member; Carrell, Harper, McAuliffe and Padden.

Staff: Shani Bauer (786-7468)

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 has a child support obligation that is not being paid. A veteran may also voluntarily have the VA apportion his or her VA benefits to the veteran'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, 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.

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.

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 benefits toward satisfaction of the child support obligation for the period for which benefits are paid.

Appropriation: None.

Fiscal Note: Available.

Committee/Commission/Task Force Created: No.

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

Staff Summary of Public Testimony: PRO: There is no provision currently in law that allows veterans benefits paid for the support of a child to be credited to the parent's child support obligation. In effect, this requires the parent to pay twice. This provision mirrors similar provisions for social security and worker's compensation already in law. This is a good bill.

Persons Testifying: PRO: Representative Goodman, prime sponsor; Ted Wicorek, Veterans Legislative Coalition.