

SB 5525 - H COMM AMD

By Committee on Higher Education

1 Strike everything after the enacting clause and insert the
2 following:

3 "NEW SECTION. **Sec. 1.** A new section is added to chapter 28B.10
4 RCW to read as follows:

5 The department of veteran affairs shall consult with an entity
6 within the University of Washington school of social work that has
7 expertise in suicide prevention to gather data on the number of
8 veterans attending each four-year institution of higher education and
9 the mental health resources available to those veterans in order to
10 identify gaps in mental health services for veterans at each of the
11 four-year institutions of higher education. Based on the data and
12 identified gaps, the department of veterans affairs shall coordinate
13 with the state universities, regional universities, and the state
14 college to ensure each institution has a licensed mental health
15 counselor with training in posttraumatic stress disorder available to
16 work exclusively with student, faculty, and staff veterans, as well
17 as their spouses and dependents, through each institution's veteran
18 resource center. The licensed mental health counselor may be employed
19 by the institution and receive training in posttraumatic stress
20 disorder from the department of veterans affairs or may be a
21 counselor contracted through the department of veterans affairs. The
22 department of veterans affairs shall leverage private, local, and
23 federal dollars when possible to implement this section."

24 Correct the title.

EFFECT: (1) Strikes the requirement for each of the four-year institutions of higher education to employ a full-time licensed mental health counselor to work with veterans and their families.

(2) Requires the Department of Veterans Affairs (DVA) to consult with an entity at the University of Washington School of Social Work with expertise in suicide prevention to gather data in order to identify gaps in mental health services for veterans.

(3) Requires the DVA to coordinate with the four-year institutions of higher education to ensure each institution has a licensed mental health counselor with training in posttraumatic

stress disorder available to work exclusively with veterans and their spouses and dependents, whether the counselor be employed by the institution or contracted through the DVA.

(4) Requires the DVA to leverage private, local, and federal dollars when possible to implement the bill.

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