
**Innovation, Community & Economic
Development, & Veterans Committee**

SSB 5803

Brief Description: Concerning the recruitment and retention of Washington national guard members.

Sponsors: Senate Committee on Ways & Means (originally sponsored by Senators Conway, Boehnke, Dozier, Frame, Holy, Hunt, Kuderer, Liias, Lovelett, Lovick, MacEwen, Mullet, Nobles, Padden, Stanford, Wagoner, Warnick and Wellman; by request of Military Department).

Brief Summary of Substitute Bill

- Provides a recruitment bonus for a National Guard member whose successful recruitment results in an enlistment contract.

Hearing Date: 2/20/24

Staff: Martha Wehling (786-7067).

Background:

The State Militia.

The Washington Constitution provides for the organization of the state militia. The Governor serves as Commander-in-Chief, and with the advice and consent of the Senate, appoints an adjutant general, who is chief of staff to the Governor and is the executive head of the militia.

The organized militia consists of the National Guard and the State Guard. The National Guard is the military force of Washington that is organized, equipped, and federally recognized under the National Defense Act. The Adjutant General commands the National Guard and recruits, trains, maintains, and administers the organized militia.

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

The Governor may order the organized militia into active service to execute Washington's laws or perform duties the Governor deems proper in certain circumstances or in imminent belief of those circumstances, including war, insurrection, rebellion, invasion, tumult, riot, mob, organized violence, or public disaster. The organized militia may also be ordered into active service to enforce controlled substances statutes; prepare for, or recover from, the specified circumstances; or when otherwise required for public health, safety, or welfare, including failure of responsible civil authorities to preserve law and order or protect life or property.

National Guard Enlistment.

National Guard enlistment must conform with the federal Department of Defense laws and regulations, which specify the term and the minimum and maximum age for original (new) recruits and reenlistment. A recruit to the National Guard must also be a United States citizen or permanent resident; meet certain educational requirements; achieve a minimum score on the Armed Services Vocational Aptitude Battery test; and meet certain medical, physical, and moral requirements.

Summary of Bill:

A National Guard member may identify an appropriate recruitment prospect to the Military Department. If the prospect enters into an enlistment contract for entry or reentry into the National Guard, a "completed accession," the referring member may receive a referral bonus in an amount up to \$500. The Adjutant General will set the bonus amount each calendar year. Current members of the National Guard, command or senior enlisted advisors, and members with recruitment duties are ineligible for the referral program.

Appropriation: None.

Fiscal Note: Requested on February 7, 2024.

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