



State Legislative Update for the Week of February 16 - 20, 2015

Monday, February 16, 2015

Senate Session

Bill introductions of veterans interest:

Senators Newman, Anderson and Chamberlain introduced:

SF 840: A bill for an act relating to veterans; appropriating money to design and construct a memorial honoring Australian veterans.

Referred to the Committee on Finance.

Senators Carlson, Saxhaug, Anderson, Latz and Gazelka introduced:

SF 851: A bill for an act relating to veterans; appropriating money to public safety for a grant for training community safety personnel about the use of de-escalation techniques.

Referred to the Committee on Finance.

Senator Pederson, J. introduced:

SF 861: A bill for an act relating to taxation; property; providing a reduced classification rate for property of a congressionally chartered veterans organization; amending Minnesota Statutes 2014, section 273.13, subdivision 25.

Referred to the Committee on Taxes.

House Session

Bill introductions of veterans interest:

Anderson, P.; Newton and Anderson, M., introduced:

HF 877: A bill for an act relating to human services; modifying group residential housing by requiring a supplementary service rate for a facility in Stearns County; amending Minnesota Statutes 2014, section 256I.05, by adding a subdivision.

The bill was read for the first time and referred to the Committee on Health and Human Services Reform.

Dettmer introduced:

HF 959: A bill for an act relating to military and veterans affairs; appropriating money for military affairs and veterans affairs.

The bill was read for the first time and referred to the Committee on State Government Finance.

Dill and Dettmer introduced:

HF 961: A bill for an act relating to game and fish; allowing residents of Minnesota veterans homes to take antlerless deer without permit; amending Minnesota Statutes 2014, section 97A.465, by adding a subdivision.

The bill was read for the first time and referred to the Veterans Affairs Division.

Schomacker introduced (1/22/2015):

HF 316: A bill relating to human services; modifying the nursing facility reimbursement system; amending Minnesota Statutes 2014, sections 256B.0915, subdivision 3a; 256B.441, subdivisions 1, 5, 13, 14, 17, 30, 31, 35, 48, 50, 51, 51a, 53, 54, 56, by adding a subdivision; repealing Minnesota Statutes 2014, section 256B.441, subdivisions 14a, 19, 50a, 52, 55, 58, 62.

The bill was read for the first time and referred to the Committee on Aging and Long-Term Care Policy. The bill was amended on 2/5/2015 and re-referred to Health and Human Services Reform.

Committee Hearings

Committee: Senate Health, Human Services and Housing

Chair: Sen. Kathy Sheran

Agenda:

SF 504 (Wiklund): Military members expedited temporary health licensing establishment. This bill would provide temporary licensing as a licensed professional counselor (LPC), a licensed professional clinical counselor (LPCC) and a licensed alcohol and drug counselor (LADC) for former and current members of the military. The bill, as amended, was recommended to pass and re-referred to the Committee on State and Local Government.

Committee: House Veterans Affairs Division

Chair: Rep. Bob Dettmer

Agenda:

HF 125 (Dettmer): Veteran jobs tax credit provided. The bill provides employers with a nonrefundable income tax credit for hiring qualified veterans. The credit equals ten percent of the wages paid to the veteran, and the maximum credit is \$3,000 for each disabled veteran hired, \$1,500 for each unemployed veteran hired, and \$500 for each 9-11 veteran hired. It disallows the credit if the employer employs or has previously employed the veteran. It would be effective tax year 2015. The committee report was adopted and re-referred to Taxes.

HF 312 (Dettmer): Military retirement pay subtraction phase-in provided. This bill allows an income tax subtraction for military retirement pay, phased in over five years beginning in tax year 2015. The subtraction would be phased-in on the following schedule:

- 2015: 20 percent of military retirement pay;

- 2016: 40 percent of military retirement pay;
- 2017: 60 percent of military retirement pay;
- 2018: 80 percent of military retirement pay;
- 2019 and following years: 100 percent of military retirement pay.

Language provides for military retirement pay allowed as a subtraction also be subtracted from alternative minimum taxable income.

The committee report was adopted with a delete-all amendment that provides for a \$500 subtraction for taxable years beginning after December 31, 2014; a \$1,000 subtraction for taxable years beginning after December 31, 2015; and a \$1,500 subtraction for taxable years beginning after December 31, 2016. This would be effective for taxable years beginning after December 31, 2014. The bill was re-referred to Taxes.

HF 501 (Fenton): Military and overseas voting provisions modified. This bill expands the existing special procedures for absentee voting by members of the military and other citizens residing overseas to include members of the Minnesota National Guard. The bill also allows adult children of citizens residing permanently overseas to vote in Minnesota elections, if a parent resided in Minnesota prior to leaving the country. The committee report was adopted and re-referred to Government Operations and Elections Policy.

HF 406 (O'Driscoll): Community safety personnel training about use of de-escalation techniques funding provided. Appropriates \$100,000 in each year of the biennium to the commissioner of public safety for training state and local community safety personnel in the use of crisis de-escalation techniques. The commissioner must consult with the Minnesota Peace Officers and Training Board, and may consult with other relevant individuals, when selecting a training service provider. The training service provider must have a demonstrated understanding of veterans' issues. The training opportunities must be provided statewide. The committee report was adopted and re-referred to Public Safety and Crime Prevention Policy and Finance.

HF 260 (Lesch): Uniform Deployed Parents Custody and Visitation Act established and modified. This bill creates a chapter called the Uniform Deployed Parents Custody and Visitation Act. It provides procedures and new laws that govern how parties can enter agreements for parenting and custody, including visitation with a nonparent and electronic, email, and telephone communication with a deployed parent, prior to and during the deployment of a parent who is in the armed services. This uniform law has been enacted in Nevada, Colorado, North and South Dakota, Tennessee and North Carolina. In addition to Minnesota, it has also been introduced in 2015 in the District of Columbia, Nebraska and South Carolina. This bill does not change or alter the rights granted under the Service Members' Civil Relief Act which allows service members to stay civil proceedings during active duty for various lengths of time. The committee report was adopted as amended and re-referred to Public Safety and Crime Prevention Policy and Finance.

Tuesday, February 17, 2015

Committee Hearings

Committee: House State Government Finance

Chair: Rep. Sarah Anderson

Agenda:

Continued Presentation of the Governor's Budget: Department of Military Affairs (DMA), Don Kerr, Executive Director. The current DMA budget is out of balance with surplus funding in the Incentives appropriation and insufficient funding in the Maintenance appropriation. Also, the General Support appropriation is forecasted to provide insufficient funding if not slightly increased, and currently provides no funding for routine capital asset replacement of their wheeled vehicle fleet. This results in three change items:

- One time transfer of \$10M from Incentives to Maintenance with multiyear use authority;
- Annual reallocation of \$3M per year from Incentives to Maintenance appropriation; and,
- Annual reallocation of \$460K per year from Incentives to General Support appropriation.

These change items result in zero growth to the agency budget request.

Wednesday, February 18, 2015

House Session

Bill introductions of veterans interest:

Anderson, M.; Heintzeman; Dettmer and Drazkowski introduced:

HF 1028: A bill for an act relating to taxation; individual income; providing a subtraction for military retirement pay; amending Minnesota Statutes 2014, sections 290.01, subdivision 19b; 290.091, subdivision 2.

The bill was read for the first time and referred to the Veterans Affairs Division.

Newberger introduced:

HF 1046: A bill for an act relating to capital investment; appropriating money for the Emergency Management Training Facility at Camp Ripley; authorizing the sale and issuance of state bonds.

The bill was read for the first time and referred to the Committee on State Government Finance.

The House moved to invite the Senate to a Joint Convention to be held on Wednesday, March 4, 2015 at 7:00 PM in the House of Representatives' chamber to elect members to the Board of Regents of the University of Minnesota. The motion prevailed.

Committee Hearings

Committee: House State Government Finance

Chair: Rep. Sarah Anderson

Agenda:

Governor's Budget: Minnesota Department of Veterans Affairs change items. MDVA's base budget for FY2016-17 is \$270M. The Department recommends an increase in funding to the base of \$2,110,000 in FY16 and \$4,328,000 in FY17 and on-going. Currently MDVA's base funding is not keeping pace with salary/operational costs and thus there is a projected shortage in the out years. An additional \$1M in FY16-17 is requested for repair and betterment at the veterans homes, as well as language change and grant making authority for the Support Our Troops fund to foster increased license plate sales and re-instill public confidence in plate proceeds usage.

Committee: Senate State and Local Government

Chair: Sen. Patricia Torres Ray

Agenda:

SF 617 (Housley): Military Spouses and Families Day. This bill designates Military Spouses and Families Day on the Friday following Thanksgiving in honor of the support and sacrifice the spouses and families of military personnel make for their country. It also requests the Governor to issue a proclamation honoring this observance. The bill, as amended, was passed and sent to the Senate floor.

SF 74 (Gazelka): Camp Ripley sentinel landscape designation and coordinating committee establishment. This bill establishes a coordinating committee to designate certain lands in the vicinity of Camp Ripley to be contained in the sentinel landscape. The purpose of this mission is to identify lands near Camp Ripley that are important to the nation's defense and Camp Ripley's role in the nation's defense. Owners of designated lands will be encouraged to voluntarily manage their land in a manner that is consistent with Camp Ripley's military mission. It also requires the Adjutant General, in consultation with the coordinating committee, to prepare a report, by January 16, 2017, on the committee's work and progress in shaping Camp Ripley's sentinel landscape. The bill, as amended, was recommended to pass and was re-referred to the Finance Committee. If it is determined there is no fiscal impact, the bill will go to the Senate floor.

SF 222 (Benson): Veteran-owned small business certification for state procurement modification and contract bid preference and appropriation. This bill establishes an alternative procedure for a business to be certified as a veteran-owned small business. The procedure required under current law is a federal verification while this language would establish a state verification. Under current law, a veteran-owned small business is entitled to certain benefits, including bid preferences in state, county and city contracting. It requires counties to establish a bid preference program for veteran-owned businesses for capital projects that are paid for in whole or in part by state general obligation bonds. It also directs local governments to implement a bid preference for veteran-owned small businesses for projects funded with state general obligation bonds. An appropriation of \$100,000 in FY2016 is provided to develop and implement a certification program for veteran-owned small businesses. The bill, as amended was passed and re-referred to the Finance Committee.

SF 338 (Saxhaug): Government entity authority to release certain military release forms to another government entity expansion. A government entity is permitted to release military release forms to another government entity for purpose of locating records. The bill passed and was re-referred to the Judiciary Division.

SF 427 (Saxhaug): Veterans trust modifications; Big Island veterans camp board of governors repeal. The bill permits trustees to remove a trustee by majority vote, with the consent of the Commissioner of Veterans Affairs. The trustees hold in an irrevocable trust the proceeds realized from the disposal of the property and assets of Big Island Veterans Camp. It also repeals obsolete language. The bill was recommended to pass, as amended, and sent to the Senate floor.

SF 362 (Anderson, B): Veterans Honor and Remember Flag designation as a symbol of recognition and honor for fallen military service members. The bill describes the flag, which is protected by US copyright, suggests days for flag display, and authorizes the chief administrators of government buildings to prescribe procedures for displaying the Honor and Remember Flag. Senate research noted the implications of the copyright. The bill was passed, as amended, and re-referred to the Finance Committee.

Committee: House Mining and Outdoor Recreation Policy

Chair: Rep. Tom Hackbarth

Agenda:

HF 129 (Dettmer): Big Marine Lake veterans rest camp improvement funding provided, and money appropriated. This bill appropriates \$113,000 in FY2016 from the arts and cultural heritage fund for a grant to the Disabled Veterans Rest Camp Association for the veterans rest camp on Big Marine Lake to connect existing trails and to develop and build a children's recreation area. The committee report was adopted as amended, and re-referred to Legacy Funding Finance.

Thursday, February 19, 2015

Senate Session

Bill introductions of veterans interest:

Senators Kiffmeyer and Anderson introduced:

SF 951: A bill for an act relating to higher education; granting resident status for purposes of higher education grants and scholarships to members of the state's National Guard who reside in the state; amending Minnesota Statutes 2014, section 136A.101, subdivision 8.

Referred to the Committee on Higher Education and Workforce Development.

Senator Bakk moved that the Senate accept the invitation of the House of Representatives to meet in Joint Convention in the House Chamber at 7:00 p.m., Wednesday, March 4, 2015, to elect members to the Board of Regents of the University of Minnesota. The motion prevailed.

House Session

Bill introductions of veterans interest:

Davids, Newton, Dettmer and Persell introduced:

HF 1106: A bill for an act relating to state government; requiring the commissioner of administration to ensure that service-disabled, veteran-owned businesses receive a percentage of state procurement; providing bid preferences; proposing coding for new law in Minnesota Statutes, chapter 16C.

The bill was read for the first time and referred to the Veterans Affairs Division.

Upcoming Committee Hearings of Veterans Interest Week of February 23 - 27, 2015

Monday, February 23, 2015

Committee: House Veterans Affairs Division

Chair: Rep. Bob Dettmer

Room: 200 State Office Building

Time: 12:45 PM

Agenda:

HF 450 (Lohmer): Military Spouses and Families Day established.

HF 453 (Hancock): Veterans programs funding provided, and money appropriated.

HF 546 (Dettmer): Government entity permitted to release military release forms to another government entity for purpose of locating records.

HF 841 (Dettmer): Resident status granted for purposes of higher education grants and scholarships to members of the state's National Guard who reside in the state.

Committee: Senate Transportation and Public Safety

Chair: Sen. D. Scott Dibble

Room: 15 Capitol

Time: 2:00 PM

Agenda:

SF 345 (Johnson, A.): Purple Heart recipients driver's license and Minnesota identification card designation establishment; free state park permit eligibility authorization.

Committee: Senate Veterans and Military Affairs Subdivision

Chair: Sen. Jim Carlson

Room: 112 Capitol

Time: 4:00 PM

Agenda:

Presentation by Department of Military Affairs

Presentation by Minnesota Department of Veterans Affairs

SF 425 (Saxhaug): Military affairs and veterans affairs appropriations.

Tuesday, February 24, 2015

Committee: Senate Judiciary

Chair: Sen. Ron Latz

Room: 15 Capitol

Time: 12:00 PM

Agenda:

SF 338 (Saxhaug): Government entity authority to release certain military release forms to another government entity expansion.

Wednesday, February 25, 2015

Committee: House Aging and Long-Term Care Policy

Chair: Rep. Joe Schomacker

Room: 10 State Office Building

Time: 8:15 AM

Agenda:

HF 300 (Lohmer): Social security benefits subtraction allowed.

HF 304 (Lueck): Social security benefits subtraction allowed.

HF 308 (Davids): Social Security benefits subtraction phase in allowed.

HF 309 (Davids): Social Security benefits subtraction phase in allowed.

HF 746 (Atkins): Social Security benefit subtraction phase in allowed.

Committee: House Public Safety and Crime Prevention Policy and Finance

Chair: Rep. Tony Cornish

Room: 10 State Office Building

Time: 10:15 AM

Agenda:

HF 260 (Lesch): Uniform Deployed Parents Custody and Visitation Act established and modified.

Committee: Senate Veterans and Military Affairs Subdivision

Chair: Sen. Jim Carlson

Room: 112 Capitol

Time: 4:00 PM

Agenda:

SF 131 (Sieben): Veterans homes cost of care calculations modifications and personal needs allowance adjustments authorization.

SF 258-(Gazelka): Minnesota military museum appropriation.