



State Legislative Update for Week of May 19 - 23, 2014

The Legislature adjourned sine die Friday evening, May 16th.

Friday, May 16, 2014

Senate Session

HF2490, the Omnibus Capital Investment Bill, was read the third time and placed on final passage. The bill passed, 47-17.

The following provisions are of veterans interest:

- \$1,732,000 for the Camp Ripley/Veterans Trail; and,
- \$450,000 for the Minnesota Hmong-Lao Veterans Memorial in the Capitol Area.

The Department of Veterans Affairs received \$2,700,000. Of this amount, the following allocations are:

- \$2,000,000 for asset preservation at the veterans homes in Minneapolis, Fergus Falls, Hastings, Luverne, and Silver Bay, and up to \$70,000 for the Little Falls veterans cemetery; and,
- \$700,000 for the deep tunnel on the Minneapolis Veterans Home campus.

Also, \$100,000 is for a grant to North St. Paul to design and construct a memorial to those who have served or are presently in the military of the USA and those who have died while in the line of duty. The appropriation is not available until the Commissioner of Management and Budget has determined at least an equal amount has been committed to the project from nonstate sources.

HF1068, the General Fund Capital Investment Bill, was read the third time and placed on final passage. The bill passed, 44-19.

Of veterans interest is the \$225,000 to the Commissioner of Administration for a grant to Edina to design and construct the All Veterans memorial in Edina. At least an equal amount has to be committed to the project from nonstate sources.

The Conference Committee Report on **HF3167**, the Omnibus Supplemental Tax Bill, was read the third time as amended by the Conference Committee, and placed on its repassage. The bill passed, 59-1.

The two provisions of veterans interest are:

- The time period for the surviving spouse of a totally disabled veteran to continue to receive the disabled veteran's property tax exclusion is extended from five years to eight years; and,
- The extension of the existing military pay subtraction to National Guard members in Active Guard/Reserve and individuals in active status under the state adjutant general.

The Conference Committee Report on **HF3172**, the Omnibus Supplemental Budget Bill, was read the third time, as amended by Conference Committee, and placed on its repassage. The bill passed, 37-22.

The following provisions are of veterans interest:

- Military Veterans honorably discharged from the armed forces are entitled to resident tuition at Minnesota public postsecondary institutions, effective for academic terms beginning after August 1, 2014.
- The Minnesota Housing Finance Agency receives \$250,000 for at least five grants of up to \$50,000 each to conduct a housing needs assessment for veterans in any community within the state.
- The Minnesota Humanities Center receives \$125,000 from the arts and cultural heritage fund for the Veterans' Voices program to educate and engage the community regarding veterans' contributions, knowledge, skills, and experiences. Of this amount, \$25,000 is for transfer to the Association of Minnesota Public Education for statewide programming to promote the Veterans' Voices program. This is a onetime appropriation.
- Up to six percent preference for state contract bids will be awarded to small businesses that are majority-owned and operated by veterans.
- Professional licensing boards shall establish a procedure to expedite the issuance of a license or certification or temporary license to an active duty military member, the spouse of an active duty military member or a veteran who has left service in the two years preceding the date of license or certification application.
- The Peace Officer Standards and Training (POST) Board will receive \$50,000 for training state and local community safety personnel in the use of crisis de-escalation techniques for use with Minnesota veterans following their return from active military service in a combat zone. This is a onetime appropriation.
- In 2015, \$400,000 from the heritage enhancement account in the game and fish fund is for grants to local chapters of Let's Go Fishing of Minnesota to provide community outreach to senior citizens, youth and veterans and for the costs associated with establishing and recruiting new chapters. The grants must be matched with contributions from nonstate sources.
- A \$26,000 grant in 2015 to Stearns County to provide administrative funding to support a group residential housing services provider serving veterans in Stearns County. This is a onetime appropriation.

House Session

HF2447, a bill requiring employers to provide veterans with time off for Veterans Day, passed on a vote of 111-17. (It was laid on the table in the Senate.)

The Conference Committee Report on **HF3167**, the Omnibus Supplemental Tax Bill, was read the third time and placed upon its final repassage. The bill passed, 131-0.

The Conference Committee Report on **HF3172**, the Omnibus Supplemental Budget Bill, was read the third time, as amended by Conference Committee, and placed on its repassage. The bill passed, 75-55.

Tuesday, May 20, 2014

The Governor signed into law the following bills containing provisions of veterans interest:

HF1068, the General Fund Capital Investment Bill, which includes \$199,000,000 in General Fund appropriations for capital improvements across the state and \$80,000,000 for housing infrastructure bonds to build affordable housing.

HF2490, the Omnibus Capital Investment Bill, which includes \$893,054,000 of capital improvement projects across the state including: downtown improvements, natural resources and water, public safety and transportation, veterans, and economic development.

HF3167, the Omnibus Supplemental Tax Bill, which provides an additional \$103,000,000 in tax relief to middle class families, farmers, veterans, small businesses and nonprofits.

Wednesday, May 21, 2014

The Governor signed into law the following bill containing provisions of veterans interest:

HF2852, the Omnibus Game and Fish Bill, modifies game and fish laws; the use of vehicles for hunting; provisions for taking wild animals; requirements of raffles with a wild game or fish taking event; provisions for wildlife management areas, trespassing, license provisions and fees; and disability-related angling and hunting license and special permit provisions.