



State Legislative Week in Review Week of May 10 - 17, 2013

Friday, May 10, 2013

Senate Session

HF1444, the Omnibus Transportation Finance Bill, was placed on Special Orders. Included in the Senate version is a \$90,000 appropriation each year from the general fund to reimburse greater Minnesota transit providers for the costs of providing fixed route public transit rides free for veterans certified as disabled and \$50,000 each year for a grant to the Upper Midwest Community Policing Institute for use in training community safety personnel about the use of de-escalation strategies for handling returning veterans in crisis. This is a one-time appropriation. The Senate passed the bill, as amended, 35-27.

The House passed their version of HF1444, as amended, on April 24, on a vote of 101-30.

House Session

HF1183, the Omnibus Legacy Bill, was passed, as amended, on a vote of 70-55. Of veterans interest are two provisions; namely, \$80,000 in FY14 for at least four grants to local unites of government for veterans memorials in municipal parks which has to be matched by non-state funds equal to the amount of the grant received; and \$425,000 each year for programs and purposes of the Minnesota Humanities Center of which \$100,000 each is for the Veterans' Voices awards program.

Conference Committee Hearing

SF1589: Omnibus State Government, Veterans and Military Affairs Appropriations.

Chair: Rep. Mary Murphy and Sen. Tom Saxhaug

Conferees:

Senate: Saxhaug; Eaton; Franzen; Champion; Metzen

Representatives: Murphy; Nelson; Simon; Newton; Bernardy

Agenda:

Discussion/adoption of same, similar and non-controversial language items.

Language items pertaining to veterans were authorized military leave;

“Commissioner” defined; CVSO grants; MN GI Bill; evidence of

Rehabilitation; Veteran-owned small businesses; Reciprocity Examination;

and the repeal of the Operational Improvement grant.

Monday, May 13, 2013

Senate Session

During session, the House did not concur with the amendments the Senate placed on **HF1444**, the Omnibus Transportation Bill so a conference committee was requested. The House members are: Reps. Hornstein, Erhardt, Bernardy, Sundin and Beard. The Senate members are: Senators Dibble, Jensen, Kent, Champion and Carlson.

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Agenda:

Review of outstanding language items (non-rider related)

Review of fiscal differences

Overview of target

The sections of the CVSO grant language that were the same in both the House and Senate bills were moved with the exception of the sections containing the monetary amounts. The same was done with the MN GI Bill language that was identical in both bills.

The fiscal difference between the House and Senate change items is \$856,000, with the Senate version totally \$26,856,000 and the House version at \$26,000,000. The target for the committee is \$28,814,000.

Tuesday, May 14, 2013

Senate Session

On Special Orders, **HF1138**, a bill for an act relating to the military; updating the Minnesota Code of Military Justice, was read for the third time and placed on final passage. The bill passed, 66-0.

Wednesday, May 15, 2013

Senate Session

On Special Orders, **HF1183, the Omnibus Legacy Bill**, passed as amended on a vote of 55-10. Provisions within the bill differ from the version passed in the House so a conference committee will be requested.

Thursday, May 16, 2013

Senate Session

The Conference Committee report on **SF671, the Omnibus Public Safety Finance Bill**, was adopted and the bill re-passed, 64-1. Within this bill is an appropriation of \$50,000 each year in FY14 -15 for a grant to the Upper Midwest Community Policing Institute for use in training community safety personnel about the use of de-escalation strategies for handling returning veterans in crisis. This is a one-time appropriation. The Commissioner shall consult with the Peace Officers Standards and Training Board regarding the design and content of the course, and must ensure the training opportunities are reasonably distributed throughout the state.

On Special Orders, **SF671, the Omnibus Game and Fish Bill**, received its third reading and passed, as amended, 60-6. Of veterans interest is the section that allows veterans with a 100 percent service connected disability the option of obtaining an annual or a permanent deer license. A person issued a permanent license must register with a license agent and receive site tags each year the license is used.

House Session

The Conference Committee report on **SF671, the Omnibus Public Safety Finance Bill**, was adopted and re-passed as amended by the Conference Committee, 121-12. The bill will be presented to the Governor.

Friday, May 17, 2013

House Session

HF270, the Bonding Bill, as the delete-all amendment was amended, provides \$22,320,000 in bonding proceeds to the Minnesota Department of Veterans Affairs. Of this amount:

- \$3,000,000 is designated for asset preservation to the five veterans homes and the state veterans cemetery;
- \$18,935,000 is designated for the completion of Phase III of Building 17S, the construction of a distribution service tunnel, design, construct and equip a network and server room, including installation of new fiber optic lines; and,
- \$385,000 for the veterans homes resident lift system.

Included in the bill is \$500,000 for the Minnesota Hmong-Lao Veterans Memorial in the Capitol area. This appropriation is not available until at least \$150,000 has been committed to the project from non-state sources. Also, the All-Veterans Memorial in Edina will receive \$225,000 once an equal amount has been committed to the project from non-state sources. Needing a super majority to pass, the bill was defeated, 76-56.

Conference Committee Hearing

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Agenda:

Pending

The bill introductions and committee hearing status can be found on the Veteran Bill Tracker spreadsheet under Legislative Updates at <http://www.mdva.state.mn.us/> .