



House of Representatives

General Assembly

File No. 63

February Session, 2018

Substitute House Bill No. 5238

House of Representatives, March 28, 2018

The Committee on Veterans' Affairs reported through REP. HENNESSY of the 127th Dist., Chairperson of the Committee on the part of the House, that the substitute bill ought to pass.

AN ACT CONCERNING MENTAL HEALTH RESOURCES FOR VETERANS AND MEMBERS OF THE ARMED FORCES.

Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives in General Assembly convened:

1 Section 1. Subsection (c) of section 27-102*l* of the 2018 supplement to
2 the general statutes is repealed and the following is substituted in lieu
3 thereof (*Effective October 1, 2018*):

4 (c) In addition to the powers and duties prescribed under section 4-
5 8, the commissioner shall have the following powers and duties:

6 (1) To prepare studies and collect information (A) concerning
7 facilities and services available to members of the armed forces,
8 veterans or their spouses, eligible dependents or family members,
9 including facilities and services for veterans who may have been
10 exposed to a Vietnam herbicide during their periods of military
11 service, and (B) in consultation with the Commissioner of Mental
12 Health and Addiction Services, for use in improving identification of
13 the mental health needs of members of the armed forces and veterans

14 and directing resources to effectively address such mental health
15 needs;

16 (2) To require that the administrator of each nursing home and
17 assisted living facility in the state notify the Office of Advocacy and
18 Assistance not later than April 1, 2017, and every six months thereafter,
19 of any new resident in such nursing home or assisted living facility
20 who is a veteran or a spouse, eligible dependent or family member of a
21 veteran, provided each such nursing home or assisted living facility
22 shall not release the identity of any such new resident to the office
23 without the consent of the new resident. As used in this subdivision,
24 "new resident" means a resident of whom such nursing home or
25 assisted living facility has not previously notified the Office of
26 Advocacy and Assistance;

27 (3) To cooperate with service agencies and organizations
28 throughout the state in disseminating and furnishing counsel and
29 assistance of benefit to residents of this state who are or have been
30 members of the armed forces or their spouses or eligible dependents,
31 which will indicate the availability of: (A) Educational training and
32 retraining facilities; (B) health, medical, rehabilitation and housing
33 services and facilities; (C) employment and reemployment services; (D)
34 provisions of federal, state and local laws affording financial rights,
35 privileges and benefits; and (E) other matters of similar nature;

36 (4) To assist veterans and their spouses, eligible dependents and
37 family members in the preparation, presentation, proof and
38 establishment of such claims, privileges, rights and other benefits
39 accruing to them under federal, state and local laws;

40 (5) To cooperate with all national, state and local governmental and
41 private agencies securing or offering services or any benefits to
42 veterans or their spouses or eligible dependents;

43 (6) To develop and prepare a long-range plan and mission statement
44 for the Veterans Residential Services facility and Office of Advocacy
45 and Assistance;

46 (7) To review all appeals made by veterans or their spouses, eligible
 47 dependents or family members and render the final decision thereon
 48 regarding the denial of admission to any program or the refusal to
 49 render any service or benefit which is administered by the Department
 50 of Veterans Affairs, the discharge or transfer from any such program
 51 or any disciplinary action taken while participating in any such
 52 program;

53 (8) If the Veterans Residential Services facility closes or ceases to
 54 provide housing to veterans, to provide or arrange for housing to any
 55 veteran residing at said facility or receiving care or treatment at the
 56 Healthcare Center, as defined in subsection (b) of section 27-103, on the
 57 date of such closure or on the date said facility ceases to provide
 58 housing to veterans; and

59 (9) To publish on the Internet extensive and reliable data regarding
 60 women veterans, including, but not limited to, federal and state
 61 services and benefits, current challenges and notable women veterans
 62 and their contributions.

This act shall take effect as follows and shall amend the following sections:		
Section 1	October 1, 2018	27-1021(c)

Statement of Legislative Commissioners:

Title was changed.

VA *Joint Favorable Subst. -LCO*

The following Fiscal Impact Statement and Bill Analysis are prepared for the benefit of the members of the General Assembly, solely for purposes of information, summarization and explanation and do not represent the intent of the General Assembly or either chamber thereof for any purpose. In general, fiscal impacts are based upon a variety of informational sources, including the analyst's professional knowledge. Whenever applicable, agency data is consulted as part of the analysis, however final products do not necessarily reflect an assessment from any specific department.

OFA Fiscal Note

State Impact: None

Municipal Impact: None

Explanation

This bill requires the Department of Veterans Affairs to collect and provide information for mental health resources for veterans and results in no fiscal impact to the state.

The Out Years

State Impact: None

Municipal Impact: None

OLR Bill Analysis

sHB 5238

AN ACT CONCERNING MENTAL HEALTH RESOURCES FOR VETERANS AND MEMBERS OF THE ARMED FORCES.

SUMMARY

This bill expands the veterans affairs commissioner's powers and duties regarding studies and data collection.

The bill requires him, in consultation with the Mental Health and Addiction Services commissioner, to prepare studies and collect information to (1) better identify the mental health needs of members and veterans of the armed forces and (2) direct resources to effectively address such needs. Existing law, unchanged by the bill, requires the veterans affairs commissioner to prepare studies and collect information on facilities and services available to serve members; veterans; or their spouses, eligible dependents, or family members.

EFFECTIVE DATE: October 1, 2018

COMMITTEE ACTION

Veterans' Affairs Committee

Joint Favorable

Yea 14 Nay 0 (03/14/2018)