
**Community Development, Housing &
Tribal Affairs Committee**

HB 1806

Brief Description: Addressing the definition of veteran for purposes of veterans' assistance programs.

Sponsors: Representatives Hansen, Magendanz, Appleton, Morrell, Bergquist and Fey.

Brief Summary of Bill

- Allows a counties veterans' assistance program to provide services to service members who received a general discharge under honorable conditions or a medical discharge.

Hearing Date: 2/19/13

Staff: Sean Flynn (786-7124).

Background:

In 2005 the Legislature required each county to establish a veterans' assistance program (VAP) to provide relief for indigent veterans and their families. Under the program, each county must create a veterans' advisory board to determine the needs of local indigent veterans and the available resources and programs that could benefit indigent veterans and their families. Counties also must pay for the burial or cremation costs of indigent veterans and their families.

County VAP funding is established in the Veterans' Assistance Fund (Fund). The Legislature authorizes counties to levy a tax for the Fund. The Fund may be used for veterans' assistance programs, the burial or cremation of indigent veterans or their families, and direct or indirect costs of the administration of the Fund.

"Indigent Veteran" Definition.

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

For purposes of VAP, "veteran" has the same meaning as the general statutory definitions of veteran, including active service members who have served in an armed conflict and members of the armed forces, reserves, or National Guard who have received an honorable or medical discharge and have fulfilled their military service obligations. Indigent status is determined by each county, based on public assistance received, income level, or ability to afford basic needs.

Summary of Bill:

A county may decide to extend VAP services to any service member who has received a general discharge under honorable conditions or a medical discharge.

Appropriation: None.

Fiscal Note: Requested on February 15, 2013.

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