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

HB 2668

Brief Description: Concerning insurance for enlisted members of the Washington national guard.

Sponsors: Representatives Sawyer, Zeiger, Muri, Tarleton, Seaquist, Moscoso, Reykdal, Sells, Rodne, Stanford, Gregerson, Morrell, Freeman and Ortiz-Self.

Brief Summary of Bill

- Entitles newly enlisted National Guard members to receive payments for the monthly premiums of a premium-based health plan and dental plan provided under the federal military health program.

Hearing Date: 1/28/14

Staff: Sean Flynn (786-7124).

Background:

The State Militia.

The state Constitution provides for the organization of the state militia with the Governor serving as Commander-in-Chief. The organized militia consists of the National Guard and the State Guard. The Governor may call the entire militia into active service, but the National Guard may also be called into federal service. The State Guard is available to serve when the National Guard is called into federal service.

The Governor may order the state militia into active service, among other purposes, in the event of war or other threat of force or violence against the laws of the state or the United States, or for a public disaster or when otherwise required for the health, safety, or welfare of the public.

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.

Officers and enlisted members of the state militia, while in active state service or inactive duty, are entitled to receive the same amount of pay and allowances from the state as provided by federal laws and regulations for officers and enlisted members of the United States Army. State payment is only provided if federal pay and allowances are not authorized. For periods of active state service, officers and enlisted members receive the greater of the amount of the Army pay and benefits, or an amount equal to one and one-half of the federal minimum wage.

Military Health Program.

Active military service members and National Guard and Reserve members and their families are eligible to participate in the military health program, known as TRICARE. The TRICARE program combines health care resources at military hospitals and clinics with civilian health care networks. The TRICARE program offers certain premium-based health and dental plans for purchase by National Guard and Reserve members who are not on active duty and not otherwise eligible for federal health benefits.

Summary of Bill:

Members of the National Guard within the ranks of private to sergeant, who enlist after August 1, 2014, for a period of 3 years, are eligible for payment of premium-based health and dental plans that are provided for active duty service members, National Guard members and other eligible persons. The state selects the premium-based health plan for the eligible member.

Appropriation: None.

Fiscal Note: Requested on 1/24/2014.

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