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HOUSE BILL 2754

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State of Washington

59th Legislature

2006 Regular Session

By Representatives Morrell, Campbell, Green, Haigh, Appleton, Kilmer, Darneille, Cox, Ormsby, Haler, Chase, P. Sullivan, McCoy, Wallace, Sells, Serben, Curtis, Moeller, Blake, Cody, Kenney, Conway, Ericks, Clibborn, Kessler, Simpson and Linville

Read first time 01/12/2006. Referred to Committee on State Government Operations & Accountability.

1 AN ACT Relating to creation of the veterans innovations program;  
2 amending RCW 43.60A.010; adding new sections to chapter 43.60A RCW;  
3 adding new sections to chapter 43.131 RCW; creating a new section; and  
4 making an appropriation.

5 BE IT ENACTED BY THE LEGISLATURE OF THE STATE OF WASHINGTON:

6 NEW SECTION. **Sec. 1.** The legislature finds that:

7 (1) A significant number of Washington citizens answered the call  
8 to serve our country in recent military action leaving behind families,  
9 community, employment, and education;

10 (2) Many soldiers returning to their families and communities face  
11 transition problems in areas such as family reunification, employment,  
12 education, and health;

13 (3) While the Washington state department of veterans affairs has  
14 provided services to many returning soldiers, a significant number have  
15 returned to families and communities without continuing ties to the  
16 military department or veterans' administration, but still in need of  
17 help; and

18 (4) Our state needs to honor and serve those who have protected our  
19 security and safety.

1       **Sec. 2.** RCW 43.60A.010 and 1975-'76 2nd ex.s. c 115 s 1 are each  
2 amended to read as follows:

3       As used in this chapter the following words and phrases shall have  
4 the following meanings unless the context clearly requires otherwise:

5       (1) "Department" means the department of veterans affairs((+)).

6       (2) "Director" means the director of the department of veterans  
7 affairs((+)).

8       (3) "Committee" means the veterans affairs advisory committee.

9       (4) "Board" means the veterans innovations program board.

10       NEW SECTION. **Sec. 3.** (1) There is created in the department a  
11 veterans innovations program to provide crisis and emergency relief and  
12 education, training, and employment assistance to veterans and their  
13 families in their communities.

14       (2) The veterans innovations program board is created to exercise  
15 the powers granted under sections 1 and 3 through 6 of this act. The  
16 board consists of seven citizens of the state, appointed by the  
17 governor, with recognized experience in serving veterans and their  
18 families in the community regarding transition and readjustment issues;  
19 education, training, and employment needs; and other needs experienced  
20 by veterans and their families stemming from service to their country.

21       (3) The members of the board select the chair.

22       (4) The department shall provide staff support to the board.

23       (5) Members of the board receive no compensation but shall be  
24 reimbursed for travel expenses as provided in RCW 43.03.050 and  
25 43.03.060.

26       NEW SECTION. **Sec. 4.** In addition to other applicable provisions  
27 of law pertaining to conflicts of interest of public officials, no  
28 board member, appointive or otherwise, may participate in any decision  
29 on any board contract in which the board member has any interests,  
30 direct or indirect, with any entity that would be the recipient of any  
31 aid under this chapter.

32       NEW SECTION. **Sec. 5.** The board shall:

33       (1) Establish a competitive process to solicit proposals for and  
34 prioritize project applications for potential funding. The purpose of  
35 the proposals shall be in three categories:

1 (a) Crisis and emergency relief;  
2 (b) Education, training, and employment assistance; and  
3 (c) Community outreach and resources;  
4 (2) Provide financial assistance for the following types of  
5 projects and activities including, but not limited to:  
6 (a) Proposals that have innovative and effective ways to help  
7 veterans and their families in need in their communities, including  
8 improving community support for families;  
9 (b) Allowing counties to better serve their veterans;  
10 (c) Addressing health issues affecting the well-being of families;  
11 (d) Tapping into existing community resources to aid veterans and  
12 their families;  
13 (e) Linking assistance with other benefits, especially federal  
14 benefits, to maximize the effort to help the veteran and offset the  
15 pressure on state and local resources;  
16 (f) Assisting veterans to be more employable to benefit themselves,  
17 their families, and their community;  
18 (3) Prescribe the form and manner of the grant application and may  
19 request applicants to identify nonstate matching funds available for  
20 the project;  
21 (4) Establish a peer review committee to provide an independent  
22 peer review of all proposals submitted that are determined to be  
23 competitive for a grant award. The board shall review findings of the  
24 peer review committee when making final grant allocation decisions;  
25 (5) Establish technical resource committees as needed to provide  
26 expertise and to coordinate the effort and prevent overlap of effort.  
27 The committee may include state agencies including veterans affairs,  
28 employment security, community, trade, and economic development, and  
29 the governor's office, as well as private and nonprofit organizations;  
30 (6) Develop the prioritized list through open and public meetings;  
31 (7) Establish performance measures to evaluate the board's  
32 activities and grants awarded; and  
33 (8) Report annually to the appropriate standing committees of the  
34 legislature and to the joint committee on veterans and military affairs  
35 on the implementation of sections 1 and 3 through 6 of this act. The  
36 report must include, but is not limited to, information on the number  
37 of applications for assistance, the grant amount awarded each project,

1 a description of each project, and performance measures of the program.  
2 The first report must be submitted by December 31, 2006.

3 NEW SECTION. **Sec. 6.** (1) The board may receive gifts, grants, or  
4 endowments from public or private sources that are made from time to  
5 time, in trust or otherwise, for the use and benefit of the purposes of  
6 the board and spend gifts, grants, or endowments or income from the  
7 public or private sources according to their terms, unless the receipt  
8 of the gifts, grants, or endowments violates RCW 42.17.710.

9 (2) The board may adopt rules under chapter 34.05 RCW as necessary  
10 to carry out the purposes of sections 1 and 3 through 5 of this act and  
11 this section.

12 (3) The board may perform all acts and functions as necessary or  
13 convenient to carry out the powers expressly granted or implied under  
14 sections 1 and 3 through 5 of this act and this section.

15 NEW SECTION. **Sec. 7.** A new section is added to chapter 43.131 RCW  
16 to read as follows:

17 The veterans innovations program and its powers and duties shall be  
18 terminated on June 30, 2016, as provided in section 8 of this act.

19 NEW SECTION. **Sec. 8.** A new section is added to chapter 43.131 RCW  
20 to read as follows:

21 The following acts or parts of acts, as now existing or hereafter  
22 amended, are each repealed, effective June 30, 2017.

- 23 (1) Section 1 of this act;
- 24 (2) Section 3 of this act;
- 25 (3) Section 4 of this act;
- 26 (4) Section 5 of this act; and
- 27 (5) Section 6 of this act.

28 NEW SECTION. **Sec. 9.** The sum of ten million dollars, or as much  
29 thereof as may be necessary, is appropriated for the biennium ending  
30 June 30, 2007, from the general fund to the department of veterans  
31 affairs for the purposes of this act.

1        NEW SECTION.   **Sec. 10.**   Sections 1 and 3 through 6 of this act are  
2   each added to chapter 43.60A RCW.

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