
State Government & Tribal Affairs
Committee

SSB 5035

Brief Description: Improving veterans' access to services.

Sponsors: Senate Committee on Government Operations & Elections (originally sponsored by Senators Hobbs, Swecker, Marr, Roach, Kastama, Kauffman, Kilmer, Hatfield, McAuliffe and Haugen; by request of Joint Committee on Veterans' and Military Affairs).

Brief Summary of Substitute Bill

- Requires the Department of Veterans Affairs to study ways to increase veterans' access to state and federal assistance programs.

Hearing Date: 3/24/09

Staff: Marsha Reilly (786-7135)

Background:

The Department of Veterans Affairs (DVA) was created in 1975 and provides many services to veterans and their families, including medical care, assistance with claims for benefits, estate management, counseling, and financial assistance. The DVA also assists veterans with education, training, and employment.

Summary of Bill:

The DVA must study ways to increase its access to veterans and to increase veterans' access to state and federal assistance programs. By January 1, 2010, the DVA must submit a report to the Legislature that addresses the following:

- how to achieve the goal of identifying all veterans in the state within five years;
- how to efficiently identify veterans as their population grows;

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- how to identify veterans through referrals from other state agencies;
- how to effectively inform veterans of state and federal programs;
- the potential costs and savings to the state if the DVA's recommendations were undertaken; and
- legislation needed to implement the DVA's recommendations.

House Bill Compared to Senate Bill. The Senate amended the bill to change the due date for the report from December 1, 2009, to January 1, 2010.

Appropriation: None.

Fiscal Note: Available.

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