

SENATE BILL REPORT

SB 5958

As of February 18, 2015

Title: An act relating to providing for representation of the state veterans' homes on the governor's veterans affairs advisory committee.

Brief Description: Providing for representation of the state veterans' homes on the governor's veterans affairs advisory committee.

Sponsors: Senators Roach, Liias, Benton, McCoy, Angel and Chase; by request of Department of Veterans Affairs.

Brief History:

Committee Activity: Government Operations & Security: 2/19/15.

SENATE COMMITTEE ON GOVERNMENT OPERATIONS & SECURITY

Staff: Samuel Brown (786-7470)

Background: The Veterans Affairs Advisory Committee (VAAC). The VAAC provides advice and makes recommendations to the Governor and the Director of the Department of Veterans Affairs (DVA). The Committee has 17 members appointed by the Governor to serve four-year terms. The VAAC consists of the following:

- one member from the Washington Soldier's Home in Orting and one member from the Veterans' Home in Retsil;
- one member from each of the three congressionally chartered and recognized veterans service organizations with the largest memberships in the state;
- ten members to represent the congressionally chartered and recognized veterans service organizations that have at least one active chapter in the state; and
- two members who are veterans at large.

The Governor must ensure that appointments represent all regions of the state and minority and women's veteran viewpoints.

State Veterans' Homes. The state Constitution mandates that the Legislature provide a soldiers' home for honorably discharged resident soldiers, sailors, and marines who were disabled in the line of duty. DVA manages the veterans' homes and must provide room and board, medical, dental, domiciliary and nursing care, physical and occupational therapy, and recreational activities to residents. There are four veterans' homes in the state:

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.

- the Washington Soldiers' Home in Orting, established in 1980;
- the Washington Veterans' Home in Retsil, established in 1907;
- the Eastern Washington Veterans' Home in Spokane, established in 2001; and
- the Walla Walla Veterans' Home, established in 2014.

Summary of Bill: The two VAAC positions representing the state veterans' homes in Orting and Retsil are eliminated and two more veteran-at-large positions are added.

The VAAC must appoint members to serve as liaisons to each of the state veterans' homes. The veterans' homes liaisons must share information about VAAC business with the resident council of each veterans' home. The liaisons also must ensure that the issues of the veterans' homes residents are included in regular VAAC meetings.

Appropriation: None.

Fiscal Note: Not requested.

Committee/Commission/Task Force Created: No.

Effective Date: Ninety days after adjournment of session in which bill is passed.