
**Housing, Community Development &
Veterans Committee**

HB 2885

Brief Description: Concerning veterans service organizations.

Sponsors: Representatives Mosbrucker, Pettigrew, Harris, Maycumber and Eslick.

Brief Summary of Bill

- Directs the Washington Department of Veterans Affairs to study and make recommendations on ways to strengthen the financial viability of veterans service organizations.

Hearing Date: 2/4/20

Staff: Serena Dolly (786-7150).

Background:

Washington Department of Veterans Affairs.

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

Veterans Service Organizations.

Veterans service organizations (VSOs) are membership-based entities that provide a variety of services to veterans, including assistance with transition assistance from military to civilian life, referrals to social service and health care providers, education and job training, scholarships, and social opportunities. Some VSOs are Congressionally chartered, which means they are approved by the United States Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) for purposes of assisting veterans in determining federal benefit eligibility and through any claims or appeals process.

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.

Summary of Bill:

The WDVA must study and make recommendations on ways to strengthen the financial viability of Congressionally chartered VSOs. The study must include a review of the availability of state and local programs, including tax incentives, to VSOs and recommend best practices to increase member participation. The WDVA must submit a report of recommendations to the Joint Committee on Veterans and Military Affairs and other appropriate committees of the Legislature by December 1, 2021.

Appropriation: None.

Fiscal Note: Requested on January 30, 2020.

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