
SUBSTITUTE HOUSE BILL 2670

State of Washington

58th Legislature

2004 Regular Session

By House Committee on Local Government (originally sponsored by Representatives Moeller, Sullivan, Morrell, Hinkle, Chase, McCoy, Cox, Clibborn, Condotta, Lovick, G. Simpson, Linville and Rockefeller)

READ FIRST TIME 02/06/04.

1 AN ACT Relating to veterans' relief; amending RCW 73.08.010;
2 creating new sections; providing expiration dates; and declaring an
3 emergency.

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

5 NEW SECTION. **Sec. 1.** (1) It is the intent of the legislature that
6 each county develop programs or procedures that are consistent with the
7 welfare of indigent and suffering veterans and eligible family members
8 of those veterans. These programs and procedures must adequately
9 include the veterans' community at large and provide for the public
10 good. The legislature recognizes:

11 (a) The benefits of the veteran's assistance fund and seeks to
12 ensure that future generations of indigent and suffering veterans and
13 their eligible family members have access to the fund and the programs
14 and services that have been established by the individual counties;

15 (b) That all thirty-nine counties in Washington state have varying
16 methods of implementing the veteran's assistance fund;

17 (c) That each of the counties has administered the fund based on
18 the needs of the veterans in each county;

1 (d) That interpretation of the statute governing the fund varies
2 widely from county to county; and

3 (e) That chapter 73.08 RCW requires further study and potential
4 future revision to ensure that counties are able to provide assistance
5 according to the best interests of indigent and suffering veterans and
6 their eligible family members.

7 (2) The legislature recognizes that counties have continued to
8 modify services to meet the evolving needs of indigent veterans and
9 their families. Nothing in this act is intended to interfere with the
10 veterans' relief programs or procedures of the counties until a full
11 study of those programs and procedures has been conducted.

12 (3) The legislature encourages counties to review their programs to
13 provide aid to indigent veterans and to ensure that the amount of aid
14 provided is sufficient to account for inflation in the cost-of-living.

15 NEW SECTION. **Sec. 2.** (1) The legislature recognizes that the
16 current practices of the counties in providing relief to indigent
17 veterans and their families must not be disrupted. Counties, with or
18 without veterans' advisory boards, may continue practices and programs
19 that:

20 (a) Provide services to veterans other than financial assistance
21 and aid;

22 (b) Allow the use of nonprofit organizations and coalitions to
23 provide indigent veterans' services;

24 (c) Allow funding from collections made under RCW 73.08.080 to
25 support current programs providing life changing services; and

26 (d) Allow funding from collections made under RCW 73.08.080 to
27 reimburse the county for reasonable administrative costs of providing
28 veterans' services.

29 (2) This section expires July 1, 2005.

30 NEW SECTION. **Sec. 3.** (1) The joint committee on veterans' and
31 military affairs, created in RCW 73.04.150, shall conduct a study of
32 matters affecting the administration of the veteran's assistance fund
33 and shall inform the governor and the legislature on its findings. The
34 joint committee on veterans' and military affairs shall meet in the
35 interim preceding the 2005 legislative session to study, investigate,

1 and weigh the options available with regard to providing relief to
2 indigent veterans and their families. The study must include:

3 (a) An analysis of the various methods of implementing the fund
4 amongst the counties of Washington state. In conducting this analysis,
5 the committee may consider which of these methods best addresses the
6 needs of present day and future veterans; and

7 (b) An examination of whether chapter 73.08 RCW should be amended
8 to better address the needs of indigent veterans and their families.

9 (2) Counties, local legislative authorities, veterans' service
10 programs, and other public or private entities that provide services
11 under chapter 73.08 RCW shall provide to the joint committee in a
12 timely manner information concerning the selection, design,
13 implementation, management, costs, performance, and outcomes of
14 possible changes to chapter 73.08 RCW.

15 (3) Any recommendations made by the joint committee must be
16 reported to the legislature in the form of suggested legislation prior
17 to the start of the 2005 legislative session.

18 (4) This section expires July 1, 2005.

19 **Sec. 4.** RCW 73.08.010 and 2002 c 292 s 7 are each amended to read
20 as follows:

21 For the relief of indigent and suffering veterans as defined in RCW
22 41.04.007 and their families or the families of those deceased, who
23 need assistance in any city, town or precinct in this state, the
24 legislative authority of the county in which the city, town or precinct
25 is situated may provide programs and services which advertise the
26 availability of aid under this chapter, and shall provide such sum or
27 sums of money as may be necessary, to be drawn upon by the commander
28 and quartermaster, or commander and adjutant or commander and service
29 officer of any post, camp or chapter of any national organization of
30 veterans now, or which may hereafter be, chartered by an act of
31 congress in the city or town upon recommendation of the relief
32 committee of said post, camp or chapter: PROVIDED, Said veteran or the
33 families of those deceased are and have been residents of the state for
34 at least twelve months, and the orders of said commander and
35 quartermaster, or commander and adjutant or commander and service
36 officer shall be the proper voucher for the expenditure of said sum or
37 sums of money.

1 NEW SECTION. **Sec. 5.** This act is necessary for the immediate
2 preservation of the public peace, health, or safety, or support of the
3 state government and its existing public institutions, and takes effect
4 immediately.

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