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**SENATE BILL 5021**

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**State of Washington 65th Legislature 2017 Regular Session**

**By** Senators O'Ban, Frockt, Schoesler, Darneille, Nelson, Pearson, Rolfes, Conway, Sheldon, Fortunato, Fain, Hasegawa, and Kuderer; by request of Attorney General

AN ACT Relating to pro bono legal services for military service members, veterans, and their families; and adding new sections to chapter 43.10 RCW.

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

NEW SECTION. **Sec.**  (1) There is hereby created an office of military and veteran legal assistance within the office of the attorney general for the purpose of promoting and facilitating civil legal assistance programs, pro bono services, and self-help services for military service members, veterans, and their family members domiciled or stationed in Washington state.

(2) For the purposes of this section and section 2 of this act, the following definitions apply:

(a) The term "service member" means an active or reserve member in any branch of the armed forces of the United States, including the national guard, coast guard, and armed forces reserves.

(b) The term "veteran" has the same meaning as defined in RCW 41.04.005 and 41.04.007.

(c) The term "family member" means the spouse or domestic partner and dependent minor children of a service member or veteran.

(3) The attorney general may not provide legal assistance programs, pro bono services, or self-help services to a service member, veteran, or family member with regard to a criminal prosecution.

NEW SECTION. **Sec.**  The office of military and veteran legal assistance shall:

(1) Recruit and train volunteer attorneys, identify service programs available to perform pro bono services for service members, veterans, and their family members, and create and maintain a registry of the same;

(2) Assess and assign requests for pro bono services to volunteer attorneys and service programs registered with the office of military and veteran legal assistance; and

(3) Establish an advisory committee to include, among others, representatives from legal assistance offices on military installations in the state, the office of civil legal aid, the Washington state bar association's legal assistance to military personnel section, the Washington state veterans bar association, the Washington department of veterans affairs, the Washington military department, veteran service organizations, military support organizations, and organizations involved in coordinating, supporting, and delivering civil legal aid and pro bono legal services in Washington state. The committee shall provide advice and assistance to the attorney general regarding program design, operation, volunteer recruitment and support strategies, service delivery objectives and priorities, and funding.

NEW SECTION. **Sec.**  The attorney general may apply for and receive grants, gifts, donations, bequests, or other contributions to help support and to be used exclusively for the operations of the office of military and veteran legal assistance.

NEW SECTION. **Sec.**  Sections 1 through 3 of this act are each added to chapter 43.10 RCW.

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