

HOUSE BILL REPORT

SB 5359

As Passed House - Amended:

April 7, 2017

Title: An act relating to requiring annual reporting on the implementation of laws to streamline licensing processes for military service members and their spouses.

Brief Description: Requiring annual reporting on the implementation of laws to streamline licensing processes for military service members and their spouses.

Sponsors: Senators Conway, Zeiger, Bailey, Rolfes, Hobbs and Kuderer.

Brief History:

Committee Activity:

Community Development, Housing & Tribal Affairs: 3/14/17, 3/23/17 [DPA].

Floor Activity:

Passed House - Amended: 4/7/17, 96-0.

Brief Summary of Bill (As Amended by House)

- Requires the Departments of Licensing and Health to report to the Legislature on the progress implementing the licensing process for veterans and military spouses.
- Requires the Department of Labor and Industries and the Professional Educator Standards Board to recommend whether their licensing and apprenticeship programs should be included in reporting on applying training for military members and their spouses.

HOUSE COMMITTEE ON COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT, HOUSING & TRIBAL AFFAIRS

Majority Report: Do pass as amended. Signed by 7 members: Representatives Ryu, Chair; Macri, Vice Chair; McCabe, Ranking Minority Member; Barkis, Assistant Ranking Minority Member; Jenkin, Reeves and Sawyer.

Staff: Sean Flynn (786-7124).

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.

Background:

In 2011 the Legislature directed the Departments of Licensing and Health (Departments) to accept military training or experience towards licensing or certification requirements for certain business and health professions if the training and experience is substantially equivalent to the state licensing standards.

The same year, the Departments were required to establish procedures for expediting licensing, certification, or registration in certain business and health-related professions for spouses of military members subject to an interstate transfer who have a professional license for such professional services in another state. Each authorizing board or commission within the Departments must develop rules to issue a temporary license to allow the military spouse with an out-of-state professional license to practice in-state for a period of time, while completing any additional reporting or licensing requirements that were not required in the prior state.

The Washington State Military Transition Council (Council) was created in 2013 by executive order to develop innovative ideas to increase veteran employment opportunities by connecting state agencies with other governmental entities, private and nonprofit organizations, as well as the Department of Defense. The Director of the Department of Veterans Affairs is the Chair of the Council.

The Joint Committee on Veterans and Military Affairs (JCVMA) was created in 2005 to study issues related to veterans and military forces as well as the administration of the Department of Veterans Affairs and the Military Department. The JCVMA conducts meetings during the legislative interim and makes recommendations to the Legislature for consideration during the upcoming legislative session.

Summary of Amended Bill:

The Departments of Licensing and Health must submit biennial reports to the Legislature and annual reports to the Council providing updates on the progress of implementing the licensing process for veterans and military spouses. The Departments also must provide annual updates for the JCVMA. The Department of Labor and Industries and the Professional Educator Standards Board each must submit a report to the Legislature by December 1, 2018, which assesses how their respective licensing, certification and apprenticeship programs apply training and experience for military members and their spouses, and recommend whether those programs should be included in the same reporting requirements for the Departments of Licensing and Health.

Appropriation: None.

Fiscal Note: Available on companion House Bill 1978.

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

Staff Summary of Public Testimony:

(In support) The state needs to improve efforts by licensing boards and commissions to recognize military training credit for licensing requirements. The reports required in this bill will be used to evaluate the progress made in applying military training and experience, including the identification of gaps in the process and ways to expedite licensing procedures. The reporting requirement will be helpful for building a relationship between the licensing boards and the military base transition centers.

(Opposed) None.

(Other) The Department of Labor and Industries conducts apprenticeship programs that could coordinate with military training experience and is willing to voluntarily provide reporting information along with the other departments.

Persons Testifying: (In support) Senator Conway, prime sponsor; Mark San Souci, Washington Department of Defense Liaison Office; Thomas Stoddert, Veterans Legislative Coalition; and Alfie Alvarado, Department of Veterans Affairs.

(Other) Tammy Fallin, Department of Labor and Industries.

Persons Signed In To Testify But Not Testifying: None.