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**SUBSTITUTE HOUSE BILL 2544**

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**State of Washington 66th Legislature 2020 Regular Session**

**By** House Appropriations (originally sponsored by Representatives Paul, Dufault, Leavitt, Graham, Smith, Volz, and Ormsby)

AN ACT Relating to the definition of veteran; amending RCW 41.04.005; and creating a new section.

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

**Sec.**  RCW 41.04.005 and 2018 c 61 s 1 are each amended to read as follows:

(1) As used in this section and RCW ((~~41.04.005,~~)) 41.16.220, 41.20.050, and 41.40.170 "veteran" includes every person, who at the time he or she seeks the benefits of this section and RCW ((~~41.04.005,~~)) 41.16.220, 41.20.050, or 41.40.170 has received an honorable discharge, is actively serving honorably, or received a discharge for physical reasons with an honorable record and who meets at least one of the following criteria:

(a) The person has served between World War I and World War II or during any period of war, as defined in subsection (2) of this section, as either:

(i) A member in any branch of the armed forces of the United States;

(ii) A member of the women's air forces service pilots;

(iii) A U.S. documented merchant mariner with service aboard an oceangoing vessel operated by the war shipping administration, the office of defense transportation, or their agents, from December 7, 1941, through December 31, 1946; or

(iv) A civil service crewmember with service aboard a U.S. army transport service or U.S. naval transportation service vessel in oceangoing service from December 7, 1941, through December 31, 1946; or

(b) The person has received the armed forces expeditionary medal, or marine corps and navy expeditionary medal, for opposed action on foreign soil, for service:

(i) In any branch of the armed forces of the United States; or

(ii) As a member of the women's air forces service pilots.

(2) A "period of war" includes:

(a) World War I;

(b) World War II;

(c) The Korean conflict;

(d) The Vietnam era, which means:

(i) The period beginning on February 28, 1961, and ending on May 7, 1975, in the case of a veteran who served in the Republic of Vietnam during that period;

(ii) The period beginning August 5, 1964, and ending on May 7, 1975;

(e) The Persian Gulf War, which was the period beginning August 2, 1990, and ending on February 28, 1991, or ending on November 30, 1995, if the participant was awarded a campaign badge or medal for such period;

(f) The period beginning on the date of any future declaration of war by the congress and ending on the date prescribed by presidential proclamation or concurrent resolution of the congress; and

(g) ((~~The following~~)) Any armed conflicts, if the participant was awarded the respective campaign badge or medal, or if the service was such that a campaign badge or medal would have been awarded, except that the member already received a campaign badge or medal for a prior deployment during that same conflict((~~: The crisis in Lebanon; the invasion of Grenada; Panama, Operation Just Cause; Somalia, Operation Restore Hope; Haiti, Operation Uphold Democracy; Bosnia, Operation Joint Endeavor; Operation Noble Eagle; southern or central Asia, Operation Enduring Freedom; Persian Gulf, Operation Iraqi Freedom; Iraq and Syria, Operation Inherent Resolve; and Afghanistan, Operation Freedom's Sentinel~~)).

NEW SECTION. **Sec.**  (1) The select committee on pension policy and the law enforcement officers' and firefighters' plan 2 retirement board, with the assistance of the office of the state actuary, the department of retirement systems, the Washington state military department, and the Washington state department of veterans affairs shall study the provision of interruptive military service credit to members of the Washington state retirement systems. The study shall examine the current and projected eligibility of members and retirees for military service credit, and associated costs. In particular, the study must examine the difference in service credit and cost that would be generated by expanding free military service credit to all members who received an expeditionary medal, but not a campaign medal.

(2) The department of retirement systems, the office of the state actuary, the Washington state military department, and the Washington state department of veterans' affairs must provide information or conduct research as needed by the select committee on pension policy or the law enforcement officers' and firefighters' plan 2 retirement board.

(3) To encourage consistency among the treatment of military service among the Washington state retirement systems, the select committee on pension policy and the law enforcement officers' and firefighters' plan 2 retirement board must communicate their preliminary recommendations to each other prior to October 30, 2020, and, considering the preliminary recommendations of the other body, issue final reports containing recommendations and analysis of the potential cost of those recommendations to the appropriate committees of the legislature by January 2, 2021.

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