SECOND ENGROSSED SUBSTITUTE HOUSE BILL 1541

State of Washington 69th Legislature 2025 Regular Session

By House Technology, Economic Development, & Veterans (originally sponsored by Representatives Abell, Donaghy, Morgan, Kloba, Shavers, Zahn, Hill, and Simmons; by request of Department of Veterans Affairs)

READ FIRST TIME 02/13/25.

AN ACT Relating to the veterans affairs advisory committee; and amending RCW 43.60A.080.

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

Sec. 1. RCW 43.60A.080 and 2015 c 219 s 1 are each amended to read as follows:

(1) There is hereby created a veterans affairs advisory committee which shall serve in an advisory capacity to the governor and the director of the department of veterans affairs. The committee shall appoint members to serve as liaisons to each of the state veterans' homes, unless the home has a representative appointed to the committee. This liaison must share information on committee meetings and business with the resident council of the state's veterans' homes, as well as bring information back for the committee's consideration to ensure veterans' home resident issues are included at regular committee meetings. The committee shall be composed of seventeen members to be appointed by the governor, and shall consist of the following:

(a) ((~~One~~)) Two representatives of the ((~~Washington soldiers' home and colony at Orting and one representative of the Washington veterans' home at Retsil~~)) state veterans' homes identified in RCW 43.60A.075. Each home's resident council may nominate up to three

individuals whose names are to be forwarded by the director to the governor. In making the appointments, the governor shall consider these recommendations or request additional nominations. If ((~~the resident council does not provide any nomination~~)) there are no homes nominations, the governor may appoint a member at large in place of ((~~the~~)) a home's representative.

(b) One representative each from the three congressionally chartered or nationally recognized veterans service organizations as listed in the current "Directory of Veterans Service Organizations" published by the United States department of veterans affairs with the largest number of active members in the state of Washington as determined by the director. The organizations' state commanders may each submit a list of three names to be forwarded to the governor by the director. In making the appointments, the governor shall consider these recommendations or request additional nominations.

(c) ((~~Ten~~)) Six members shall be chosen to represent those congressionally chartered or nationally recognized veterans service organizations listed in the directory under (b) of this subsection and having at least one active chapter within the state of Washington. Up to three nominations may be forwarded from each organization to the governor by the director. In making the appointments, the governor shall consider these recommendations or request additional nominations.

(d) ((~~Two~~)) Six members shall be veterans at large, as well as any other at large member appointed pursuant to (a) of this subsection. Any individual or organization may nominate a veteran for an at large position. Organizational affiliation shall not be a prerequisite for nomination or appointment. All nominations for the at large positions shall be forwarded by the director to the governor.

(e) No organization shall have more than one official representative on the committee at any one time.

(f) In making appointments to the committee, care shall be taken to ensure that members represent all geographical portions of the state ((~~and~~)), minority viewpoints, military experiences, and personal attributes, and that the issues and views of concern to women veterans are represented.

(2) All members shall have terms of four years. In the case of a vacancy, appointment shall be only for the remainder of the unexpired term for which the vacancy occurs. No member may serve more than two

consecutive terms, with vacancy appointments to an unexpired term not considered as a term. ((~~Members appointed before June 11, 1992, shall continue to serve until the expiration of their current terms; and then, subject to the conditions contained in this section, are eligible for reappointment.~~))

(3) The committee shall adopt an order of business for conducting its meetings.

(4) The committee shall have the following powers and duties:

(a) To serve in an advisory capacity to the governor and the director on matters pertaining to the department of veterans affairs;

(b) To acquaint themselves fully with the operations of the department and recommend such changes to the governor and the director as they deem advisable.

(5) Members of the committee shall receive no compensation for the performance of their duties but shall receive a per diem allowance and mileage expense according to the provisions of chapter 43.03 RCW.

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