

MAINE STATE LEGISLATURE

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Date: 3/22/16

(Filing No. H-584)

VETERANS AND LEGAL AFFAIRS

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**STATE OF MAINE
HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
127TH LEGISLATURE
SECOND REGULAR SESSION**

COMMITTEE AMENDMENT "A" to H.P. 1100, L.D. 1612, Bill, "An Act To Implement the Recommendations of the Commission To Strengthen and Align the Services Provided to Maine's Veterans Regarding Enhancements to the Bureau of Maine Veterans' Services"

Amend the bill in section 3 in subsection 7 in the first paragraph in the 8th line (page 4, line 2 in L.D.) by inserting after the following: "program." the following: 'Upon request of the director, agencies required to enter into memoranda of understanding with the director include, but are not limited to, the Bureau of Motor Vehicles under the Department of the Secretary of State, the Bureau of Parks and Lands under the Department of Agriculture, Conservation and Forestry, the Department of Inland Fisheries and Wildlife, the Department of Health and Human Services, the University of Maine System and the Maine Community College System.'

Amend the bill in section 3 in subsection 7 in the last paragraph in the 3rd line (page 4, line 15 in L.D.) by striking out the following: "Maine Army National Guard or Maine Air National Guard" and inserting the following: 'Army National Guard or Air National Guard'

Amend the bill in section 3 in subsection 8 in the first paragraph in the last line (page 4, line 22 in L.D.) by striking out the following: "is capable of" and inserting the following: 'supports the bureau in meeting the following objectives'

Amend the bill in section 3 in subsection 8 in paragraph C in the last line (page 4, line 26 in L.D.) by inserting after the following: "members;" the following: 'and'

Amend the bill in section 3 in subsection 8 by striking out paragraphs D and E (page 4, lines 27 to 30 in L.D.) and inserting the following:

'D. Providing efficient and timely customer service to veterans seeking assistance from the bureau.'

Amend the bill by striking out all of sections 4 and 5 and inserting the following:

COMMITTEE AMENDMENT

1 **Sec. 4. Director of the Bureau of Maine Veterans' Services to establish**
 2 **mobile Veterans Service Officer positions.** No later than October 15, 2016, the
 3 Director of the Bureau of Maine Veterans' Services within the Department of Defense,
 4 Veterans and Emergency Management shall establish 2 additional Veterans Service
 5 Officer positions within the bureau. The positions may not be assigned exclusively to a
 6 particular region or office within the State but must be used to assist veterans in the State
 7 where the demand for services is greatest, as determined by the director.

8 **Sec. 5. Appropriations and allocations.** The following appropriations and
 9 allocations are made.

10 **DEFENSE, VETERANS AND EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT, DEPARTMENT**
 11 **OF**

12 **Veterans Services 0110**

13 Initiative: Establishes headcount for one Veterans Outreach Specialist position.

| | | | |
|----|-------------------------------|----------------|----------------|
| 14 | GENERAL FUND | 2015-16 | 2016-17 |
| 15 | POSITIONS - LEGISLATIVE COUNT | 0.000 | 1.000 |
| 16 | | | |
| 17 | GENERAL FUND TOTAL | \$0 | \$0 |

18 **Veterans Services 0110**

19 Initiative: Provides funding for 2 Veterans Services Officer positions and related costs.

| | | | |
|----|-------------------------------|----------------|----------------|
| 20 | GENERAL FUND | 2015-16 | 2016-17 |
| 21 | POSITIONS - LEGISLATIVE COUNT | 0.000 | 2.000 |
| 22 | Personal Services | \$0 | \$162,516 |
| 23 | All Other | \$0 | \$28,000 |
| 24 | | | |
| 25 | GENERAL FUND TOTAL | \$0 | \$190,516 |

26 **Veterans Services 0110**

27 Initiative: Provides funding for the purchase and maintenance of an electronic case
 28 management system.

| | | | |
|----|---------------------|----------------|----------------|
| 29 | GENERAL FUND | 2015-16 | 2016-17 |
| 30 | All Other | \$0 | \$80,000 |
| 31 | | | |
| 32 | GENERAL FUND TOTAL | \$0 | \$80,000 |

33 **Veterans Services 0110**

34 Initiative: Provides funding to implement a marketing and outreach program for veterans.

| | | | |
|---|---------------------------|----------------|-----------------|
| 1 | GENERAL FUND | 2015-16 | 2016-17 |
| 2 | All Other | \$0 | \$75,000 |
| 3 | | | |
| 4 | GENERAL FUND TOTAL | <u>\$0</u> | <u>\$75,000</u> |

| | | | |
|----|--|----------------|------------------|
| 5 | DEFENSE, VETERANS AND EMERGENCY | | |
| 6 | MANAGEMENT, DEPARTMENT OF | | |
| 7 | DEPARTMENT TOTALS | 2015-16 | 2016-17 |
| 8 | | | |
| 9 | GENERAL FUND | \$0 | \$345,516 |
| 10 | | | |
| 11 | DEPARTMENT TOTAL - ALL FUNDS | <u>\$0</u> | <u>\$345,516</u> |
| 12 | | | |

13 **SUMMARY**

14 This amendment specifies the agencies with which the Director of the Bureau of
15 Maine Veterans' Services within the Department of Defense, Veterans and Emergency
16 Management is authorized to enter into memoranda of understanding to help achieve the
17 marketing and outreach program objectives outlined in the bill. The amendment specifies
18 that the records management system is intended to help the bureau meet certain
19 outcomes. The bill states that the system itself must be capable of meeting those
20 outcomes. It also removes the requirement that the records management system be
21 capable of identifying burial locations on maps of the Maine Veterans' Memorial
22 Cemetery System. The amendment strikes the provision in the bill that requires a
23 veterans' service organization that receives funds from the Coordinated Veterans
24 Assistance Fund to provide the Director of the Bureau of Maine Veterans' Services with
25 data demonstrating that the funds are being used to assist veterans in filing claims with
26 the United States Department of Veterans Affairs. It also strikes the provision in the bill
27 that requires the director to regularly conduct an assessment of the number and
28 geographic distribution of veteran service officers employed by the bureau. Finally, the
29 amendment adds an appropriations and allocations section that provides for funding for
30 the records management system required by the bill, 2 additional veterans service officers
31 to be employed by the bureau and funding to make permanent the position of Veterans
32 Outreach Specialist, which is currently a 2-year contracted position.

33 **FISCAL NOTE REQUIRED**

34 (See attached)



127th MAINE LEGISLATURE

LD 1612

LR 2675(02)

An Act To Implement the Recommendations of the Commission To Strengthen and Align the Services Provided to Maine's Veterans Regarding Enhancements to the Bureau of Maine Veterans' Services

Fiscal Note for Bill as Amended by Committee Amendment 'A' (H-584)
 Committee: Veterans and Legal Affairs
 Fiscal Note Required: Yes

Fiscal Note

| | FY 2015-16 | FY 2016-17 | Projections FY 2017-18 | Projections FY 2018-19 |
|-----------------------------------|------------|------------|---------------------------|---------------------------|
| Net Cost (Savings) | | | | |
| General Fund | \$0 | \$345,516 | \$395,383 | \$403,075 |
| Appropriations/Allocations | | | | |
| General Fund | \$0 | \$345,516 | \$395,383 | \$403,075 |

Fiscal Detail and Notes

The bill includes a General Fund appropriation of \$345,516 to the Department of Defense, Veterans and Emergency Management in fiscal year 2016-17 for an electronic case management system, 2 Veterans Services Officer positions and a marketing and outreach program. It also establishes headcount but no funding for one Veterans Outreach Specialist position which will not begin until an existing contract for similar services expires.

Additional costs to the University of Maine System and the Maine Community College System to enter into the required memorandum of understanding can be absorbed within existing budgeted resources.