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Report to the Veteran Community on the 78th Legislative Session

Fulfilling the Requirements of Assembly Bill 62

Provided by the Director of the Nevada Department of Veterans Services

September 1, 2015

Introduction: This memorandum provides a full legislative report to the veteran community as required through the passage of Assembly Bill 62 (AB 62) during the 78th Legislative Session (2015). This, and future editions of the report, are intended to provide information regarding veterans legislation to the veteran community, and, over time, to establish a history legislation introduced, passed, or even considered that can be referenced in future policy discussions. AB 62 requires the Director of the Nevada Department of Veterans Services to provide this report no later than September 1 following each regular session of the legislature, and requires that the report provide details on the following:

- A description of each newly-enacted statute by the Legislature which affects veterans in this State.
- A description of each bill, or portion of a bill, newly enacted by the Legislature that appropriates or authorizes money for veterans, or otherwise affects the amount of money that is available for veterans' services, including, without limitation, each line item in a budget for such an appropriation or authorization.
- A brief plan by the Director for carrying out duties required by newly-passed legislation.
- The date on which each statute and bill described in the memorandum becomes effective.

For this report, the definition of a veteran is that which is described in Nevada Revised Statutes (NRS) 417.005, which defines a veteran as a resident of Nevada who was regularly enlisted, drafted, inducted or commissioned in the Armed Forces of the United States and was accepted for and assigned to active duty, served in the National Guard or Reserve Component for at least six continuous years, or was commissioned in the United States Public Health Service or the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration. Additionally, NRS 417.005 requires that the veteran was separated from service under conditions other than dishonorable. This definition was used to determine which bills and budgets passed and approved during this Session affect veterans in Nevada.

Background: In January of 2014, Governor Brian Sandoval signed a proclamation making it the "Year of the Veteran" in Nevada, calling for Nevada to become the most military- and veteran-friendly state in the nation. With this focus in mind, the Governor signed multiple executive orders implementing various policy measures and creating multiple policy councils to focus on specific needs within the veteran community. In February of 2015, the ICVA published the *Nevada Veterans Comprehensive Legislative Reform Report* as a compilation of each of these councils' individual reports, and also included recommendations from the veteran community as well as several independently commissioned studies on topics important to the veteran and service provider communities. Many of the pieces of legislation described below were originally recommended through the ICVA's report.

The *Nevada Veterans Comprehensive Legislative Reform Report* combined existing efforts to meet the needs of Nevada's veterans with the additional efforts created and implemented through the "Year of the Veteran." For over a decade, NDVS has participated in three events throughout each biennium to convene the veteran community around its legislative issues. These three events are the Veterans Legislative Symposium, the Veterans Legislative Summit, and Veterans and Military Day at the Legislature.

The Veterans Legislative Symposium for the 78th Legislative Session was held on Saturday, March 8, 2014, in Reno. The Symposium brought together various perspectives from the veteran community and to develop a list of prioritized legislative recommendations for the upcoming legislative session. Over a hundred people participated in the event and 21 policy recommendations were prioritized through a vote held at the end of the meeting.

The Veterans Legislative Summits were held in both Las Vegas and Reno on January 22 and 23, respectively. The purpose of these events was to convene the veteran community to provide an update on the status of the prioritized legislative recommendations developed during the Symposium, an overview of the additional recommendations that were developed through the policy councils and various other entities, and a description of bills that had been pre-filed with the Legislative Council Bureau. It also provided an opportunity for veterans to engage directly with lawmakers and other elected leaders ahead of the Session.

The final event for the 78th Legislative Session was Veterans and Military Day at the Legislature (VAMDAL), hosted jointly by NDVS and the Nevada National Guard. VAMDAL provided an opportunity for veterans to talk directly to legislators on significant bills and budget items, and for the community to see a display of some of the Nevada National Guard's capabilities. The 2015 event was hosted in Carson City on Thursday, March 26, 2015, and included presentations from the Governor, the Speaker of the Assembly, and the Senate Majority Leader, a presentation of a Concurrent Resolution honoring Nevada's fallen from the wars in Iraq and Afghanistan in both Houses of the Legislative, and a luncheon provided by the Nevada Department of Veterans Services and served by members of the Nevada National Guard.

In addition to these existing efforts to convene the veteran community around veterans issues, the Governor's also appointed subject matter experts to six policy councils in 2013 and 2014—Student Veterans Advisory Council, Veterans Suicide Prevention Council, Governor's Military Council, Women Veterans Advisory Committee, Incarcerated Veterans Advisory Council, and the ICVA. Each council provided a full report of findings and legislative recommendations, each with a particular interest on improving outcomes in the areas of employment, education, and wellness for Nevada's veterans, which was aligned with the Administration's efforts under the Nevada Green Zone Initiative. Following the submission of each report, the Director of Military and Veterans Policy in the Office of the Governor and the Director of Veterans Services worked with partners to ensure that the recommendations were addressed through agency policies, executive order, or through bill draft requests submitted by the Governor.

Combining the existing structure with the various councils created by the Governor throughout 2013 and 2014 allowed for unprecedented progress toward addressing veterans legislative issues. For example, ahead of the 77th Legislative Session in 2013, the Veterans Legislative Symposium developed eight prioritized recommendations, five of which were addressed through legislation. Including the items recommended through the Symposium, the "Nevada Veterans Comprehensive Legislative Reform Report" lists a total of 15 veteran bills that were considered by the Legislature in 2013. Others were developed after report published.

While merging the recommendations of the policy councils with the recommendations from the veteran community represents a tremendous model for legislative progress. During the Veterans Legislative Symposium in March of 2013, Mr. Caleb Harris, who represents the legislative interests of national Veteran Service Organizations (VSO) in Nevada, established the United Veterans Legislative Coalition, which over time changed its name to the United Veterans Legislative Council (UVLC). The UVLC proved to be unmatched in its ability to directly lobby, negotiate, and advocate on behalf of Nevada's veterans during the Session, bringing together representatives from the major VSOs and ensuring that they spoke with one voice. Much of the credit for the progress of this Legislative Session is due to their efforts.

Through the process of combining the existing Symposium with the reports of the various policy councils, commissions, and others included in the Governor's efforts, and with the constant efforts of the UVLC, a total of 90 recommendations were developed ahead of the 78th Legislative Session. Because many of the policy councils and other groups worked independently, some of the 90 recommendations were duplicates and others were general or administrative in nature, resulting in a total of 55 recommendations that were considered to be actionable through policy or budget actions through the legislature. While most of the 55 recommendations were pursued through legislation, a total of 32 of the recommendations were enacted, including most of the veteran community and the policy councils' highest priorities. A complete listing of the recommendations developed ahead of the 78th Legislative Session can be found in the *Nevada Veterans Comprehensive Legislative Reform Report*, located on the Nevada Department of Veterans Website, www.veterans.nv.gov.

The success achieved during this Session was remarkable. Governor Sandoval noted that the veteran-related bills he signed represented "the most comprehensive effort in the nation to support military veterans and their families through enhanced educational, employment and healthcare services." Together, the veteran community, advocates, service providers, and Veteran Service Organizations can take pride in their efforts to make Nevada the most military- and veteran-friendly state in the nation.

Highlights: Each bill introduced, considered, or passed is listed in greater detail in the next section below. However, a few significant highlights are worth pointing out in advance. The items listed here reflect only a portion of the significant successes achieved by the veteran community during this Session.

- Resolution honoring Nevadans who have died during the Global War on Terrorism.
- Appropriates \$14,139,883 for the construction of the Northern Nevada Veterans Home.
- Creates a Survivors' Tax Exemption on sales taxes for family members of Nevada National Guard members who are killed in the line of duty for a three-year period.
- Creates a payroll tax deduction for employers who hire unemployed veterans.
- Extension of the period a veteran using the Post-9/11 GI Bill is eligible for receiving in-state tuition from two years to five years.
- Authorization for private sector employers to prefer veterans and their spouses in hiring.
- Requires state licensing boards to develop reciprocity opportunities for service members, veterans, and their families who hold licenses in other states.
- Authorizes qualified veterans to receive license plates honoring those who have been awarded the Silver Star or the Bronze Star Medal with "V" device, Combat V or Combat Distinguishing Device.
- Limits the distribution of disability benefits as community property in granting a divorce involving at least one veteran.
- Creation of the Women Veterans Advisory Committee in statute.
- Extension of benefits for veterans who are authorized to receive special license plates for surviving the attack on Pearl Harbor or who were awarded the Purple Heart or the Congressional Medal of Honor.
- Creates the Office of Military Legal Assistance within the Office of the Attorney General.
- Allows the Employment Security Division of the Department of Employment, Training, and Rehabilitation to pay unemployment insurance to members of the National Guard if terminated from duty.
- Expands the DMV's authority to determine which paperwork is acceptable for a veteran to receive the "Veterans" designation on a driver's license.
- Requires the Director of NDVS to develop plans and programs to assist veterans who have suffered military sexual trauma.
- Increases key staff for the Nevada Department of Veterans Services.
- Creates a veteran program manager for the Division of Human Resource Management.

Detailed Description of Legislation Considered and Passed: The following section fulfills the requirements listed for the Director of NDVS's report in AB 62 by providing a description of all veteran-related legislation that passed, descriptions of appropriations intended to serve veterans, the NDVS plan for enacting these measures, and an effective date on each bill. Additionally, the following section also lists bills that failed by deadline or by the Governor's veto in order to inform future policy discussions on veterans issues.

LEGISLATION PASSED

✓ **AB 62:** AB 62 is a Governor's Office bill that addresses several issues related to Nevada's veterans. The bill establishes "Veterans Day at the Legislature" as a day of observance during each Legislative Session; increases the maximum dollar amount State Purchasing or State Public Works projects can be worth when using the 5% preference for service-connected disabled veteran-owned businesses; allows the Governor to name state buildings, parks, highways, or other property after fallen Nevada service members as long as the land or structure was leased, opened, or constructed after the effective date of the bill; requires the state agencies listed in Executive Order 2014-20 to continue to provide pertinent aggregate information pertaining to veterans to the Interagency Council on Veterans Affairs (ICVA) on an annual basis, and requires the ICVA to provide a complete report of this information to the Governor and the Legislature annually; requires the Director of the Nevada Department of Veterans Services (NDVS) to provide an overview of legislation affecting veterans to the veteran community after each regular and special session of the Legislature; requires that the cremated remains of indigent veterans in the possession of Nevada counties are reported to NDVS for interment in the Northern Nevada and Southern Nevada Veteran Memorial Cemeteries; and allows for veterans and eligible family members to choose to be interred in xeriscaped section at the Northern Nevada and Southern Nevada Veteran Memorial Cemeteries.

Sponsor(s): Introduced by the Assembly Committee on Government Affairs on behalf of the Governor

Votes: Passed both Houses unanimously, with two absent in the Assembly

Effective Date: July 1, 2015

Status: Signed into law by the Governor

NDVS Director's Plan for Implementation:

- Establishing "Veterans Day at the Legislature": NDVS will begin work on this event in 2016.
- Increasing the maximum dollar amount State Purchasing or State Public Works projects for service-connected disabled veteran-owned businesses: Through this report, NDVS will begin efforts to inform the veteran community of this new benefit. Also, NDVS will submit a report to the Governor and the Legislature on the progress of this change in October of 2016.
- Allowing the Governor to name state buildings for fallen Nevada service members: NDVS has informed the Veterans Services Commission of this new duty and will begin to develop a process for implementation.
- Requiring state agencies to provide pertinent aggregate information pertaining to veterans to the ICVA: NDVS is working with the Office of the Governor and pertinent state agencies to ensure compliance.
- Requiring the NDVS Director to provide a Legislative overview to veterans: This report fulfills this requirement.
- Requiring cremated remains of indigent veterans are reported for interment Nevada's Veteran Memorial Cemeteries: NDVS has informed the Nevada Association of Counties and the Nevada Funeral and Cemetery Services Board of this requirement.
- Allowing veterans to choose to be interred in xeriscaped sections at Nevada Veteran Memorial Cemeteries: NDVS is adding this option to the cemetery application.

✓ **AB 71:** AB 71 is a Governor's Office bill that revises various provisions relating to taxation and veterans. First, AB 71 creates a Survivors' Tax Exemption on sales taxes for first-degree family members of Nevada National Guard members who are killed in the line of duty for a three-year period. Second, AB 71 provides a payroll tax deduction for employers who hire veterans who have received unemployment insurance for at least three months. The deduction amounts to 100% of the new veteran employee's wages in the first year and 50% for the second two years. Third, current law provides an exemption from property taxes or Government Services Taxes for veterans who served on active duty during periods of combat, and provides for additional benefits based on the percentage of the veteran's service-connected disability as determined by the U.S.

Department of Veterans Affairs. AB 71 allows a veteran who also qualifies a surviving spouse of a veteran to claim both of the veterans' exemptions from property taxes.

Sponsor(s): Introduced by the Assembly Committee on Taxation on behalf of the Governor

Votes: Passed both Houses unanimously, with two absent in the Senate

Effective Date: The property tax and government services tax sections become effective upon passage and approval, allowing time for performing administration to enact them, and on July 1, 2015, for all other purposes. All other sections become effective on July 1, 2015. The employer tax deduction sections of AB 71 expire on July 31, 2022.

Status: Signed into law by the Governor

NDVS Director's Plan for Implementation: Through this report, NDVS will begin efforts to inform the veteran community and employers of these new provisions.

✓ **AB 76:** AB 76 is a Governor's Office bill that revises various provisions relating to education and veterans. First, it requires the Department of Education to share with the Interagency Council on Veterans Affairs (ICVA) aggregate data regarding pupils who are children of members of the armed forces on an annual basis. Second, AB 76 requires the Board of Regents of the Nevada System of Higher Education (NSHE) to submit a report to the Legislature that includes: the number of students who are veterans or who are receiving payments or benefits from the United States Department of Veterans Affairs; information about how policy changes may have affected the number of students who are veterans enrolled in NSHE; the number of students who are veterans who graduated during the immediately preceding academic year; and the efforts undertaken by each institution within NSHE to retain and graduate students who are veterans. Third, AB 76 encourages NSHE to foster a culture that recognizes the unique challenges student veterans. Fourth, AB 76 extends the period a veteran using the Post-9/11 GI Bill are eligible for receiving in-state tuition from two years to five years.

Sponsor(s): Introduced by the Assembly Committee on Education on behalf of the Governor

Votes: Passed both Houses unanimously, with two absent in the Senate

Effective Date: July 1, 2015

Status: Signed into law by the Governor

NDVS Director's Plan for Implementation: Through this report, NDVS will begin efforts to inform the veteran community and the listed agencies of these new provisions and reporting requirements.

✓ **AB 89:** AB 89 is a Governor's Office bill that makes various changes to encourage employment of veterans and their spouses. First, it authorizes private sector employers to prefer veterans and their spouses in hiring, which is allowed under the Civil Rights Act of 1964. Second, AB 89 requires state licensing boards to develop reciprocity opportunities for service members, veterans, and their families who hold licenses in other states or in the District of Columbia. Third, AB 89 requires the Department of Employment, Training, and Rehabilitation to gather and report aggregate unemployment data for veterans to the Interagency Council on Veterans Affairs (ICVA) on a monthly basis. Fourth, AB 89 requires state licensure boards to submit an annual report to the ICVA regarding the number of veterans applying for licenses.

Sponsor(s): Introduced by the Assembly Committee on Commerce and Labor on behalf of the Governor

Votes: Passed both Houses unanimously, with one absent in the Senate

Effective Date: The majority of the provisions in AB 89 become effective on July 1, 2015

Status: Signed into law by the Governor

NDVS Director's Plan for Implementation: Through this report, NDVS will begin efforts to inform the veteran community and the listed agencies of these new provisions and reporting requirements.

✓ **AB 103:** AB 103 authorizes qualified veterans to receive specially designed license plates honoring those who have been awarded the Silver Star or the Bronze Star Medal with "V" device, Combat V or Combat Distinguishing Device. Holders of these plates, who are also 100% service-connected disability, as determined by the federal Department of Veterans Affairs, may also have the international symbol of access inscribed and are therefore exempt from the payment of parking fees.

Sponsor(s): Oscarson; Goicoechea

Votes: Passed both Houses unanimously, with two absent in the Senate and one absent in the Assembly

Effective Date: July 1, 2015

Status: Signed into law by the Governor

NDVS Director's Plan for Implementation: Through this report, NDVS will begin efforts to inform the veteran community of these new provisions.

✓ **AB 131:** AB 131 provides that submission of an application for a driver's license, commercial driver's license, identification card, instruction permit, restricted license, special restricted license or driver authorization card or for a duplicate or the renewal or reinstatement of such a license, permit or card, to the Department of Motor Vehicles (DMV) by any eligible male authorizes the DMV to register him with the Selective Service System unless the applicant has checked a box provided on the application indicating that he is not required to register pursuant to federal law.

Sponsor(s): O'Neill, Wheeler, Kirner, Armstrong, Ellison, and Moore

Votes: Passed unanimously in the Senate with two absent, and passed 39 to 1 in the Assembly

Effective Date: Upon passage and approval for the purposes of adoption of regulations, and when the Director of the Department of Motor Vehicles notifies the Governor and the Director of the Legislative Counsel Bureau that sufficient resources are available to carry out other provisions of this act.

Status: Signed into law by the Governor

NDVS Director's Plan for Implementation: No NDVS action required.

✓ **AB 140:** AB 140 addresses the distribution of community property in granting a divorce involving at least one veteran. Previously, law stated that courts must make equal disposition of the community property of the parties. AB 140 provides that, except in cases where a valid premarital agreement provides otherwise, courts must not attach, levy or seize any federal disability benefits awarded to the veteran spouse by the federal Department of Veterans Affairs for a disability connected to his or her military service, or otherwise divide the same disability benefits. AB 140 also applies to awards of spousal support; the court must not consider any federal disability benefits awarded to a veteran for a disability connected to his or her service in the military.

Sponsor(s): Wheeler, Dickman, Dooling, Ellison, Fiore, O'Neill, Seaman; Gustavson, Settlemeyer

Votes: Passed unanimously in both Houses

Effective Date: No date

Status: Signed into law by the Governor

NDVS Director's Plan for Implementation: No NDVS action required.

✓ **AB 241:** AB 241 creates the Women Veterans Advisory Committee (WVAC) in statute, which is based on a similar council created by the Governor through Executive Order 2014-03-14. The WVAC, as established in AB 241, is required to: support the Nevada Department of Veterans Services (NDVS) in locating, educating and advocating for all women veterans; determine the unique needs of women veterans; conduct outreach; promote benefits and superior health care for women veterans; and develop educational programs for pupils, business leaders, and educators about the important role of women veterans. AB 241 also requires the WVAC to make recommendations to the Governor, Legislature, and NDVS.

Sponsor(s): Edwards, Armstrong, Kirner, Ellison, Elliot Anderson, Hambrick, Hickey, Moore, Oscarson, Stewart, Trowbridge; Goicoechea

Votes: Passed both Houses unanimously, with two absent in the Assembly

Effective Date: Upon approval and passage for the purposes of adopting any regulations or performing any preparatory administrative tasks, and October 1, 2015, for all other purposes.

Status: Signed into law by the Governor

NDVS Director's Plan for Implementation: NDVS will provide administrative support for the Women Veterans Advisory Committee once appointed by the Governor.

✓ **AB 250:** AB 250 extends benefits for veterans who are authorized to receive special license plates for surviving the attack on Pearl Harbor or who were awarded the Purple Heart or the Congressional Medal of Honor, if the same veteran also has a 100% service-connected disability, as determined by the federal Department of Veterans Affairs. AB 250 allows veterans who hold these license plates and are also 100% service-connected disabled to also have the international symbol of access on their plates, and are therefore exempt from the payment of parking fees charged by the State or any political subdivision or other public body within the State, other than the United States.

Sponsor(s): Assembly Committee on Transportation

Votes: Passed both Houses unanimously, with two absent in the Senate and the Assembly

Effective Date: Upon passage and approval for the purpose of performing any preparatory administrative tasks. For all other purposes, AB 250 becomes effective on July 1, 2018 or on the date the Director of the Department of Motor Vehicles notifies the Governor and the Director of the Legislative Counsel Bureau that sufficient resources are available.

Status: Signed into law by the Governor

NDVS Director's Plan for Implementation: Through this report, NDVS will begin efforts to inform the veteran community of these new provisions.

✓ **AB 301:** AB 301 enacts provisions prohibiting restrictions on the freedom to display the flag of the State of Nevada in common interest communities. AB 301 does not directly impact services and benefits for Nevada's veterans, but it has been tracked by veteran organizations throughout the session.

Sponsor(s): Stewart, Oscarson, Hickey, Spiegel

Votes: Passed both Houses unanimously, with one absent in the Assembly

Effective Date: July 1, 2015

Status: Signed into law by the Governor

NDVS Director's Plan for Implementation: Through this report, NDVS will begin efforts to inform the veteran community of this new provision.

✓ **AB 388:** AB 388 addresses provisions related to public employees who are active members of the National Guard or Reserves. A law enacted during the 77th legislative session (2013) established that such employees may receive 15 days of paid leave in order to fulfill military duties under orders, such as annual and weekend training. Further, if their professions require that they work weekend schedules, they are authorized an additional 24 days of leave to complete their military obligations. AB 388 provides several restrictions intended to ensure that the intent of the existing law is met. First, this bill changes the 12-month period from a calendar year to one that is determined by the employer and the Nevada Division of Human Resource Management. Second, it clarifies provisions related to concurrent receipt of military and public employee pay during periods of authorized paid leave: if the employee's military compensation is greater than his or her public employee pay, they receive only the military pay, and if it is less, they will receive their public employee pay less the total amount of their military pay. Third, AB 388 limits the use of the additional 24 days of paid leave to only weekend military service that is under orders. Fourth, AB 388 clarifies the terms "work schedule" and "working day" in order to improve accountability of the public employee's paid leaves of absence for military duty.

Sponsor(s): Paul Anderson, Kirkpatrick, Armstrong

Votes: Passed both Houses unanimously, with two absent in the Senate

Effective Date: Upon passage and approval for the purposes of adopting regulations and performing any other preparatory administrative tasks. On July 1, 2015, for all other purposes.

Status: Signed into law by the Governor

NDVS Director's Plan for Implementation: Through this report, NDVS will begin efforts to inform the veteran community of these new provisions.

NDVS Director's Plan for Implementation: This position was approved through the Unclassified Pay Act. NDVS will begin recruiting for this position as funding is available.

✓ **AB 482:** AB 482 enacts provisions related to data sharing and reporting for agencies serving veterans. Various bills sponsored by the Office of the Governor during the 78th Legislative Session require data reporting from agencies serving veterans to the Interagency Council on Veterans Affairs (ICVA), including AB 62, AB 76, AB 89, and AB 482. This aggregate data was identified by the ICVA as necessary for measuring outcomes for veterans and making data-driven policy recommendations in the future. However, as an appointed body that meets quarterly, the ICVA lacks the personnel or resources to synthesize these data for its annual report and recommendations. AB 482 was originally introduced to establish the Veterans Policy Leadership Institute (VPLI) at UNR and UNLV as a privately funded body that would work with Nevada scholars to provide for this

analysis. Due to concerns from the Legal Division of the Legislative Council Bureau regarding the establishment of a private institute within the Nevada Revised Statutes, these duties were assigned to the ICVA, which will work with the NDVS to accomplish the same goals. AB 482 also requires the Nevada Department of Veterans Services to provide an annual fiscal report on their expenditures related to serving veterans and the Veterans Services Commission to provide annual recommendations to the Governor and the Legislature.

Sponsor(s): Introduced by the Assembly Committee on Ways & Means on behalf of the Governor

Votes: Passed unanimously in the Senate with two absent, and passed 41 to 1 in the Assembly

Effective Date: Upon passage and approval

Status: Signed into law by the Governor

NDVS Director's Plan for Implementation: NDVS has informed the Veterans Services Commission of the new reporting requirements and will develop an agency fiscal report along with the agency's budget.

✓ **AB 491:** AB 491 primarily funds capital improvement projects for the State, while also levying various *ad valorem* property taxes to support the Consolidated Bond Interest and Redemption Fund. Specifically, AB 491 approves numerous expenditures for various CIP projects for state agencies. CIP projects for the Departments of Veterans Services and Military approved through AB 491 are listed below:

Veterans Services:

- \$14,139,883 for Northern Nevada Veterans Home (15-C77)
- Drainage Improvements, Veterans Cemetery – Boulder City (15-M21)

Military:

- Organizational Parking Lot Lighting, Floyd Edsall Training Center (15-C06)
- Security Fence Addition, Stead Training Center (15-C07)
- Facility Maintenance Shop, Washoe County Armory (15-C79)
- Central Plant Renovation, Clark County Armory (15-M34)
- Destratification Fans, Office of the Military, Carson City, Las Vegas and Yerington (15-M35)
- Domestic Water Heaters, Stead Army Aviation Support Facility (15-M98)
- Domestic Water Heaters, Stead Regional Training Institute (15-M99)
- Advance Planning, Nevada National Guard Readiness Center – North Las Vegas (15-P02)
- Roof Replacement, Elko Readiness Center and Henderson Armory (15-S01g)

Sponsor(s): Introduced by the Assembly Committee on Ways & Means

Votes: Passed unanimously in the Senate with one excused, and passed 32 to 8 in the Assembly with two excused

Effective Date: Most aspects of AB 491 (Sections 2-25, 27-39, and 40) become effective upon passage and approval, while others (Sections 1 and 26) become effective on July 1, 2015

Status: Signed into law by the Governor

NDVS Director's Plan for Implementation: NDVS has been working on the construction of the Northern Nevada Veterans Home since 2006 when they received conditional approval for a US Department of Veterans Affairs new home construction grant. The passage of AB 505 during the 77th Legislative Session appropriated planning/ design funding for the project. NDVS has submitted a design to the Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) and is currently working with the VA to secure the federal matching grant for this project.

✓ **SB 24:** SB 24 addresses various aspects of Nevada's laws related to unemployment insurance, including a provision for members of the Nevada National Guard. Specifically, SB 24 allows the Employment Security Division of the Department of Employment, Training, and Rehabilitation to pay unemployment insurance to members of the National Guard if terminated from duty.

Sponsor(s): Introduced by the Senate Committee on Commerce, Labor and Energy

Votes: Passed unanimously in both Houses, with one absent in the Senate

Effective Date: No date

Status: Signed into law by the Governor

NDVS Director's Plan for Implementation: Through this report, NDVS will begin efforts to inform the veteran community of this new provision.

✓ **SB 60:** SB 60 enacts several provisions related to the Office of the Attorney General, including provisions related to veterans and members of the active and reserve components of the military. Specifically, SB 60 creates the Office of Military Legal Assistance (OMLA) within the Office of the Attorney General. The OMLA is established to facilitate the delivery of legal assistance programs, pro bono services, and self-help services to current and former military personnel. Additionally, SB 60 allows the Attorney General to receive grants, gifts, donations, or bequests to support the efforts of the OMLA.

Sponsor(s): Introduced by the Senate Committee on Judiciary

Votes: Passed unanimously in both Houses

Effective Date: Sections 16 and 18 become effective upon passage and approval, and Sections 1 through 5, 9, 10, 11, 17, and 17.5 become effective on July 1, 2015

Status: Signed into law by the Governor

NDVS Director's Plan for Implementation: NDVS has been actively involved in the development of this project and NDVS VSOs will provide referrals to veterans and military members in need of services when the OMLA is fully established.

✓ **SB 90:** SB 90 enacts provisions relating to punishment for members of the Nevada National Guard who are in violation of the Nevada Code of Military Justice. Existing law allows a commanding officer in the National Guard impose certain punishments for minor offenses and allows members of the National Guard to demand a trial by court-martial in certain circumstances. SB 90 expands the right National Guard members to demand a trial by court-martial before the imposition of any punishment, including a non-judicial punishment such as suspension from duty, forfeiture of pay, or reduction in pay grade.

Sponsor(s): Introduced by the Senate Committee on Government Affairs

Votes: Passed unanimously in both Houses, with two absent in the Senate

Effective Date: July 1, 2015

Status: Signed into law by the Governor

NDVS Director's Plan for Implementation: No NDVS action required.

✓ **SB 145:** SB 145 enacts provisions related to motorcycle riders education and licensure programs for members of the military. Current law allows residents to participate in these programs to receive a license to operate a motorcycle in Nevada. SB 145 allows nonresidents who are members of the military stationed in Nevada to participate in the Program.

Sponsor(s): Manendo, Parks, Woodhouse, Spearman, Hammond; Silberkraus, Moore, Dooling, Edwards, Flores, Gardner, Seaman, Thompson

Votes: Passed unanimously in the Senate with two absent, and passed 41 to 1 in the Assembly

Effective Date: Upon passage and approval

Status: Signed into law by the Governor

NDVS Director's Plan for Implementation: Through this report, NDVS will begin efforts to inform the veteran community of this new provision.

✓ **SB 200:** SB 200 revises provisions relating to enrollment of children of military members in charter schools. Current law allows a charter school to provide preferential enrollment to a child if he or she is the child of an employee of the charter school, a child of a member of the committee to form the charter school, the child of a member of the governing body of the charter school. SB 200 allows a charter school to extend this same preference to a child of a person who resides on or is employed on a federal military installation if the charter school is located on the property of the installation.

Sponsor(s): Hammond, Denis; Armstrong, Woodbury

Votes: Passed unanimously in both Houses, with one absent in the Senate

Effective Date: July 1, 2015

Status: Signed into law by the Governor

NDVS Director's Plan for Implementation: Through this report, NDVS will begin efforts to inform the veteran community of this new provision.

✓ **SB 209:** SB 209 enacts provisions related to the allowable documentation required for a veteran to receive the veteran designation on a driver's license and identification card issued by the Department of Motor Vehicles (DMV). Current law requires that a veteran present a copy of their DD Form 214 to the DMV if they wish to have the veteran designation on a driver's license or identification. This law removes the requirement that the veteran provide a copy of his or her DD Form 214 and instead allows the DMV the discretion to determine which paperwork is acceptable.

Sponsor(s): Brower, Hardy

Votes: Passed unanimously in both Houses, with two absent in the Senate and one absent in the Assembly

Effective Date: May 29, 2015 for the purpose of adopting any regulations and performing any other preparatory administrative tasks, and on January 1, 2016, for all other purposes.

Status: Signed into law by the Governor

NDVS Director's Plan for Implementation: Through this report, NDVS will begin efforts to inform the veteran community of this new provision.

✓ **SB 268:** SB 268 enacts requirements for the Nevada Department of Veterans Services (NDVS) relating to veterans who have experienced sexual trauma while on active duty. AB 268 requires the Director of NDVS to develop plans and programs to assist veterans who have suffered military sexual trauma, it creates the Account to Assist Veterans Who Have Suffered Sexual Trauma, and requires NDVS to submit a report on plans to assist veterans who have suffered military sexual trauma and account expenditures.

Sponsor(s): Woodhouse, Ford, Spearman, Parks, Kihuen, Atkinson, Denis, Manendo, Segerblom; Swank, Joiner, Araujo

Votes: Passed unanimously in both Houses, with one absent in the Senate

Effective Date: July 1, 2015, and expires on June 30, 2017

Status: Signed into law by the Governor

NDVS Director's Plan for Implementation: NDVS is currently identifying subject matter experts and working with existing advisory bodies to develop this report and action plan.

✓ **SB 471:** SB 471 revises provisions relating to payments from the State Retirees' Health and Welfare Benefits Fund made on behalf of military retirees who are also employees of the State. SB 471 requires the payment of a subsidy from the State Retirees' Health and Welfare Benefits Fund on behalf of a retired person who is covered by the federal TRICARE program.

Sponsor(s): Senate Committee on Finance

Votes: Passed unanimously in both Houses, with one absent in the Senate

Effective Date: July 1, 2015

Status: Signed into law by the Governor

NDVS Director's Plan for Implementation: Through this report, NDVS will begin efforts to inform the veteran community of this new provision.

LEGISLATION – NOT PASSED

✗ **AB 184:** AB 184 authorizes health care providers employed by a hospital of the Department of Veterans Affairs to admit and evaluate a person alleged to have a mental illness to a hospital of the Department of Veterans Affairs whether licensed in this State or another state.

Sponsor(s): Elliot Anderson

Votes: Not voted on

Effective Date: Not applicable

Status: Failed by deadline

NDVS Director's Plan for Implementation: No NDVS action required.

✗ **AB 257:** AB 257 Enacts provisions related to Nevada's military infrastructure. AB 257 establishes the Nevada Defense Support Committee to protect Nevada's military infrastructure. This committee consists of 13

members appointed by the Governor, the Lieutenant Governor as President of the Senate, the Majority Leader of the Senate, and the Majority and Minority Leaders of the Assembly. The committee's duties include: making recommendations to preserve and protect military installations in Nevada; supporting research and development opportunities related to military contracting activities within Nevada; encouraging programs and policies to improve the military-friendly environment; identifying priorities of, sharing information with, increasing collaboration with, and forming a sustained network for military communities; and identifying opportunities for economic development.

Sponsor(s): Edwards, Elliot Anderson

Votes: Not voted on

Effective Date: Not applicable

Status: Failed by deadline

NDVS Director's Plan for Implementation: No NDVS action required.

X AB 286: AB 286 Creates the Office of Military Legal Assistance within the Office of the Attorney General. The OMLA is established to facilitate the delivery of legal assistance programs, pro bono and self-help services to current and former members of the military. AB 286 also provides that an attorney who is licensed to practice law in Nevada and who renders pro bono services for the OMLA is not liable for any civil damages as a result of any act or omission by the attorney in rendering such services if the services were rendered in good faith. **Though this bill failed by deadline, Senate Bill 60, described below, passed, and provided for the establishment of the OMLA, therefore all the goals of this Bill were accomplished.**

Sponsor(s): Armstrong, Edwards, Moore, Stewart, Wheeler, Fiore, Gardner, Hickey, Kirner, O'Neill, Shelton, Silberkraus, Titus, Trowbridge

Votes: Not voted on

Effective Date: Not applicable

Status: Failed by deadline / OMLA proposal was introduced and signed into law as SB 60

NDVS Director's Plan for Implementation: No NDVS action required for AB 286, see actions under SB 60.

X AB 294: AB 294 enacts provisions relating to suicide prevention for veterans. AB 294 requires the Department of Health and Human Services to report to the Interagency Council on Veterans Affairs (ICVA) annually on matters related to the suicide mortality rate of veterans for the ICVA's annual report to the Governor and Legislature. AB 294 also requires licensed health care providers to receive continuing education training relating to suicide screening and referral.

Sponsor(s): Thompson, Elliot Anderson, Flores, Benitez-Thompson, Sprinkle, Araujo, Bustamante Adams, Carrillo, Diaz, Joiner, Moore, Munford, Neal, O'Neill, Spiegel, Swank, Wheeler; Spearman, Parks, Ford, Atkinson, Kihuen, Denis, Manendo, Woodhouse

Votes: Not voted on

Effective Date: Not applicable

Status: Failed by deadline

NDVS Director's Plan for Implementation: No NDVS action required.

X AB 299: AB 299 enacts provisions relating to military primary education, AB 299 allows for the formation and operation of military charter schools in Nevada. AB 299 also requires the Department of Education to encourage the establishment of Junior Reserve Officers' Training Corps units in public schools throughout Nevada.

Sponsor(s): Edwards

Votes: Not voted on

Effective Date: Not applicable

Status: Failed by deadline

NDVS Director's Plan for Implementation: No NDVS action required.

X AB 318: AB 318 enacts provisions relating to certain loans provided to veterans. AB 318 establishes restrictions and requirements regarding loans to veterans that are in line with federal laws pertaining to loans to active duty members of the military, especially with respect to limiting the maximum annual percentage rate to 36%.

Sponsor(s): Swank, Diaz, Kirkpatrick, Kirner, Elliot Anderson, Paul Anderson, Araujo, Armstrong, Benitez-Thompson, Bustamante Adams, Carlton, Carrillo, Dickman, Edwards, Ellison, Flores, Hambrick, Joiner, Jones, Moore, Munford, Neal, Ohrenschall, O'Neill, Oscarson, Seaman, Shelton, Silberkraus, Spiegel, Sprinkle, Stewart, Thompson, Titus, Trowbridge, Wheeler; Woodhouse, Parks, Gustavson, Denis, Ford, Manendo, Segerblom, Smith

Votes: Not voted on

Effective Date: Not applicable

Status: Failed by deadline

NDVS Director's Plan for Implementation: No NDVS action required.

X AB 327: AB 327 makes an appropriation of \$200,222 from the State General Fund to the Eighth Judicial District Court of the State of Nevada for the salary of a Veterans Court Coordinator.

Sponsor(s): Elliot Anderson, Thompson

Votes: Not voted on

Effective Date: Not applicable

Status: Failed by deadline

NDVS Director's Plan for Implementation: No NDVS action required.

X AB 439: AB 439 makes an appropriation of \$303,867 from the State General Fund to the Office of the Military for an unanticipated shortfall in Fiscal Year 2014-2015 from additional military leave.

Sponsor(s): Assembly Committee on Ways & Means

Votes: Not voted on

Effective Date: Not applicable

Status: Failed by deadline

NDVS Director's Plan for Implementation: No NDVS action required.

X AB 471: AB 471 establishes the office of Deputy Director for Veterans Wellness and the office of the Deputy Director of Benefits within the Department of Veterans Services. Even though this policy legislation was not considered by deadline, both positions were funded through the Unclassified Pay Act (AB 489).

Sponsor(s): Assembly Committee on Ways & Means

Votes: Not voted on

Effective Date: Not applicable

Status: Failed by deadline

X SB 203: SB 203 revises provisions relating to elections, including provisions for absentee ballots for military. SB 203 requires the Secretary of State to create software that is designed for mobile devices that will include allow voters to submit any information related to elections that can otherwise be submitted electronically, including a request for a military-overseas ballot.

Sponsor(s): Spearman, Ford, Woodhouse, Parks, Denis

Votes: Not voted on

Effective Date: Not applicable

Status: Failed by deadline

NDVS Director's Plan for Implementation: No NDVS action required.

X SB 359: SB 359 enacts requirements regarding childcare facilities with respect to children of military members. SB 359 requires that childcare facilities admit children of military members, Gold Star Families, and deployed service members before admitting other children. SB 359 failed an earlier deadline during the Session, but was amended into SB 257, which also failed by deadline.

Sponsor(s): Spearman, Ford, Woodhouse, Kihuen, Parks, Atkinson, Denis, Manendo

Votes: Not voted on

Effective Date: Not applicable

Status: Failed by deadline

NDVS Director's Plan for Implementation: No NDVS action required.

LEGISLATION – VETOED

X AB472: AB 472 revises provisions governing the use of money in the Patriot Relief Account, which is

administered by the Nevada National Guard. First, AB 472 eliminates reimbursement to members of the Nevada National Guard from the Patriot Relief Account for premiums paid on Service members' Group Life Insurance. Second, AB 472 establishes a limit of \$1,000 per term on reimbursement to a member of the Nevada National Guard who is enrolled at an institution within the Nevada System of Higher Education for the cost of textbooks. Third, AB 472 allows the Adjutant General of the Nevada National Guard to establish policies for the use of this money going forward.

Sponsor(s): Assembly Committee on Ways & Means

Votes: Passed unanimously in both Houses, with two absent in the Senate

Effective Date: Not applicable

Status: Vetoed by the Governor. Governor's veto message reads, in part: "Under existing law, active members of the Nevada National Guard are able to seek reimbursement from the Patriot Relief Account for service members' group life insurance premiums. Assembly Bill 472 sought to eliminate this important benefit, which would place a greater financial hardship on members of the Nevada National Guard. At a time when our military members are still being deployed in support of global military operations, it is critical that we ensure that their families have access to this coverage in the event of a tragedy. Therefore, I veto this bill and return it without my signature or approval."

NDVS Director's Plan for Implementation: No NDVS action required.

RESOLUTIONS

In addition to the legislation considered and passed listed above, the legislature also approved two Resolutions concerning the veteran community in Nevada.

✓ **ACR 3:** ACR 3 honors Nevadans who have died during the Global War on Terrorism.

Sponsor(s): Elliot Anderson, Kirkpatrick, Hambrick, Paul Anderson, Bustamante Adams, Araujo, Armstrong, Benitez-Thompson, Carlton, Carrillo, Diaz, Dickman, Dooling, Edwards, Ellison, Fiore, Flores, Gardner, Hansen, Hickey, Joiner, Jones, Kirner, Moore, Munford, Neal, Nelson, Ohrenschall, O'Neill, Oscarson, Seaman, Shelton, Silberkraus, Spiegel, Sprinkle, Stewart, Swank, Thompson, Titus, Trowbridge, Wheeler, Woodbury; Spearman, Ford, Roberson, Brower, Woodhouse, Atkinson, Denis, Farley, Goicoechea, Gustavson, Hammond, Hardy, Harris, Kieckhefer, Kihuen, Lipparelli, Manendo, Parks, Segerblom, Settlemeyer, Smith

✓ **SCR 7:** SCR 7 authorizes the State Public Works Division of the Department of Administration to receive and use federal grant money for the demolition of the field maintenance shop at the Nevada National Guard Henderson Armory.

Sponsor(s): Senate Committee on Finance

Report prepared on: 8/10/2015
Submitted by:



Katherine N. Miller
Director, Nevada Department of Veterans Services

"Serving America's Heroes"