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Governor



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## **Report to the Veteran Community on the 79<sup>th</sup> Legislative Session**

Fulfilling the Requirements of Assembly Bill 62 (2015)  
Provided by the Director of the Nevada Department of Veterans Services

**September 1, 2017**

**1. Introduction:** This memorandum provides a full legislative report to the veteran community as required by NRS 417.103. This report, 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 of legislation introduced, passed, or considered that can be referenced in future policy discussions. NRS 417.103 requires the Director of the Nevada Department of Veterans Services (NDVS) 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, NDVS for carrying out duties required by newly-passed legislation.
- The date on which each statute and bill described in the memorandum becomes effective.

### **2. Background:**

a. For decades, NDVS has coordinated the efforts of Nevada's veterans community events by convening legislative meetings and councils to: (1) gather issues important to veterans that could be considered for a legislative bill draft request (BDR), and (2) educate veterans, their families, and their supporters so they might fully participate in the legislative process. The three events traditionally conducted are the Veterans Legislative Symposium, the Veterans Legislative Summit, and Veterans and Military Day at the Legislature.

b. During the 77<sup>th</sup> Legislative Session (2013), the United Veterans Legislative

Coalition (later renamed the United Veterans Legislative Council or UVLC) was established by many of Nevada's veterans service organizations to help create a single voice, where possible, to advocate for veterans legislation. During the 78<sup>th</sup> Legislative Session, NDVS first partnered with the UVLC to conduct the Veterans Legislative Symposium, the Veterans Legislative Summit, and Veterans and Military Day at the Legislature. This partnership continued during the 79<sup>th</sup> Legislative Session, resulting in a greater appreciation of issues affecting veterans across the state and increased UVLC activity communicating these issues to the Governor and members of the Legislature.

c. Part of the success in passing critical veterans legislation during the 79<sup>th</sup> Legislative Session can be attributed to a maturation of the UVLC, to include better collaboration between the Northern and Southern Nevada Veterans Communities.

### 3. 79<sup>TH</sup> Legislative Session Events

a. Legislative Symposia. *Reno: March 26, 2016 & Las Vegas: April 16, 2016*

(1) The Legislative Symposia served as an opportunity to bring together various perspectives from the veteran community and to develop a list of prioritized legislative recommendations. Hundreds of veterans participated in these events; the Las Vegas Symposium resulted in 20 recommendations, while the Reno Symposium resulted in 17 recommendations. Additionally, 27 items were suggested for U.S. Congressional consideration; these issues were sent to Nevada's Congressional delegation for their consideration.

(2) There were three common themes that ran throughout the recommendations made at both symposia. These themes were:

- **Take action to prevent veteran suicide**
- **Take care of family survivors (especially children) and caregivers of veterans**
- **Improve the State's ability to connect veterans to benefits, focusing on rural, student, Native American, women, and elder veterans**

These state-wide themes clearly illustrated shared concerns among Nevada veterans and their families.

(3) There were also clear common priorities when comparing the Southern and Northern Nevada priority lists. The combined state-wide priority list resulted in these top five priorities:

#### **STATE-WIDE PRIORITY 1:**

Mandate suicide prevention/awareness training for those who most commonly might come in contact with at-risk veterans (medical professionals, first responders, veteran service officers, etc.).

#### **STATE-WIDE PRIORITY 2:**

Create a Veterans Service Organization Registry to help veterans connect to helpful veterans support organizations providing benefits and services.

**STATE-WIDE PRIORITY 3:**

Extend the eligibility period for the Fry Scholarship to ensure all children of those killed in combat are able to use these benefits.

**STATE-WIDE PRIORITY 4:**

Increase the number of Veterans Service Officers in rural Nevada.

**STATE-WIDE PRIORITY 5:**

Increase the presence and support of Nevada veterans courts.

*b. 79<sup>th</sup> Legislative Summits. Las Vegas: January 7, 2017 & Reno: January 28, 2017*

The purpose of the Summits was 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.

*c. Veterans and Military Day at the Legislature (VAMDAL). Carson City: March 15, 2017*

VAMDAL, hosted jointly by NDVS and the Nevada National Guard, provided an opportunity for veterans to talk directly to legislators on legislation important to them and to see a display of Nevada National Guard equipment. The day began with an opening ceremony with keynote comments from Governor Brian Sandoval, and remarks from the Senate Majority Leader Aaron Ford, Senate Minority Leader Michael Roberson, and Speaker of the Assembly, Assemblyman Jason Frierson. Later in the day, veterans were welcomed as guests into the Senate and Assembly Chambers for a presentation of a Concurrent Resolution naming Nevada a Purple Heart State. Finally, a luncheon for veterans and veteran supporters was provided by the Nevada Department of Veterans Services and served by members of the Nevada National Guard.

**4. 79<sup>th</sup> Legislative Session Bill Overview**

a. 26 Veterans bills were signed into law by Governor Sandoval, and three bills failed by the Legislative deadline.

b. Each one of the state-wide priorities identified in the 2016 Legislative Symposia were accomplished this Session as shown here:

**Priority 1** (mandate suicide prevention/awareness training) was accomplished by AB 105, sponsored by Assemblyman Tyrone Thompson, which mandated suicide

awareness training for the health care providers for each license renewal period.

**Priority 2** (create a Veterans Service Organization Registry) was accomplished through the passage of AB 22 which authorized NDVS to create a veterans registry, a Governor's bill.

**Priority 3** (extend the eligibility period for the Fry Scholarship) was accomplished by the passage of AB 24, a Governor's bill.

**Priority 4** (increase the number of Veterans Service Officers in rural Nevada) was accomplished through the passage of the Governor's budget bill.

**Priority 5** (increase the presence and support of Nevada veterans courts) was accomplished by the passage of AB 286 from Assemblyman Elliot Anderson. This bill also included language from SB 445 from Senator Cannizzaro, which was folded into AB 286. Additionally, SB 445 from Senator Parks added \$98,000 for a Vet Court coordinator for the Eighth Judicial District Court of the State of Nevada.

c. For many veterans the highlight of the 79<sup>th</sup> Legislative Session was the passage of SB 546, the Capital Improvement Projects (CIP) Bill. Instead of waiting for Congress to appropriate the federal match of \$33 million dollars for the approved Northern Nevada Veterans Home Grant, Governor Sandoval recommended and the Legislature passed SB 546 which added \$33 million to the \$14.2 million already approved by Governor Sandoval in the 2015 CIP Bill. With this action, the State of Nevada was able to break ground for a new Northern Nevada Veterans Home on July 17, 2017.

**5. Detailed Description of Legislation Considered and Passed:** The following section provides a description of all veteran-related legislation that passed, the date each statute and bill described in the memorandum becomes effective, and a brief plan by the NDVS Director for carrying out duties required by newly-passed legislation. Additionally, this section also lists bills that failed by deadline or by the Governor's veto as reference for future policy discussions on veterans' issues.

### **Legislation Passed**

✓ **AB 2:** Addresses several issues related to Nevada National Guard. Existing law authorizes the payment of various benefits to members of the Nevada National Guard from the Patriot Relief Account, including a member called into active service who is experiencing economic hardship. This bill: (1) limits the payment of benefits from the Account to the extent money is available in the Account; and (2) removes the requirement that monetary relief may be paid for economic hardship only to those members called into active service, thereby expanding eligibility to all members experiencing economic hardship.

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

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

**Effective Date:** July 1, 2017

**Status:** Signed into law by the Governor

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

✓ **AB 19:** A housekeeping bill changing the annual reporting requirement of the VSC, ICVA, and WVAC from annual to biannual, to be due in the even-numbered years. Additionally, this bill adds reporting requirement to NDVS to report certain data to the ICVA annually, as well as amends the reporting cycle of such data to reflect the State Fiscal Year. Sections 1 and 5 of this bill standardize the information collected and reported to the Interagency Council by occupational and professional licensing boards, commissions and agencies; also require the Department of Veterans Services to submit certain additional information to the Interagency Council; and require the inclusion of quarterly unemployment data submitted to the Interagency Council in its report. The bill reduces the frequency of the report submitted by the Interagency Council from annually to biennially in an even-numbered year, which makes the Legislative Commission the recipient of the report for the Legislative Department of the State Government. Existing law requires the Nevada Veterans Services Commission to submit a report by November 1 of each year concerning its activities and recommendations to the Interagency Council and requires the Women Veterans Advisory Committee to submit a similar report by February 15 of each year to the Governor. Sections 3 and 4 of this bill reduce the frequency of the required submission of those reports to biennially in an even-numbered year and standardizes the recipients of both reports to the Governor, the Interagency Council and the Legislative Commission. Section 3 also changes the deadline by which the Nevada Veterans Services Commission is required to submit its report to February 15, which is the same biennial deadline as for the reports submitted by the Interagency Council and the Women Veterans Advisory Committee.

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

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

**Effective Date:** July 1, 2017

**Status:** Signed into law by the Governor

**NDVS Director's Plan for Implementation:** Advise the VSC, ICVA, and WVAC of the changing in reporting requirements

✓ **AB 22:** Revises various duties of the Director and Deputy Director. Existing law requires the Director of the Department of Veterans Services to appoint one Deputy Director of the Department, who must be a resident of Nevada, possess an honorable

discharge from some branch of the military or naval service and have at least four years of management or administration experience. The bill authorizes the Director to appoint additional deputy directors as needed to assist the Director in performing his or her duties including a Deputy Director for Programs and Services and a Deputy Director for Health and Wellness; and removes the requirement that a deputy director be a resident of Nevada, possess an honorable discharge and have at least four years of management or administration experience. The bill makes conforming changes to account for the appointment of additional deputy directors and eliminates references in existing law to certain powers and duties of the Deputy Director, thereby leaving the Director with the discretion to assign those powers and duties to a deputy director. The bill also requires the Director to create and maintain a database containing information on veterans residing in Nevada; ensure that each generation of veterans receives recognition annually; and create and maintain a registry of organizations that provide services and resources to veterans, service members and their families and publish the registry on the Department's Internet website. The bill removes the requirement in existing law that the office of the Deputy Director be maintained in Las Vegas and the office of the Director be maintained in the same city as the state regional office of the United States Department of Veterans Affairs.

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

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

**Effective Date:** July 1, 2017

**Status:** Signed into law by the Governor

**NDVS Director's Plan for Implementation:**

- Veterans Registry: Create and implement the Veterans Information System (VIS) by July 1, 2018. (VIS will serve as the database referred in AB 22.)
- Registry of organizations that provide services and resources to veterans, service members and their families: NDVS is currently using Nevada VetNet to accomplish this function, we will create a policy to establish vetting criteria by January 1, 2018 and modify VetNet or integrate another IT platform into the NDVS website in order to publish this registry by January 1, 2019.
- Annual recognition: In calendar year 2018 onward, NDVS will work with partners to ensure that each generation of veterans receives recognition annually.

✓ **AB 24:** Expands exemption of tuition through Nevada System of Higher Education (NSHE). This bill expands the group of students against whom tuition charges must not be assessed by including: students whose parent, legal guardian or spouse is a member of the Armed Forces of the United States who is on active duty and stationed at a military installation in this State or a military installation in another state which has a specific nexus to this State; students whose parent, legal guardian or spouse is a member of the Armed Forces of the United States who was on active duty and

stationed at a military installation in this State or a military installation in another state which has a specific nexus to this State on the date on which the student enrolled at an institution of the System if such students maintain continuous enrollment at an institution of the System; students who are using benefits under the Marine Gunnery Sergeant John David Fry Scholarship (38 U.S.C. § 3311 (b)(9)); members of the Armed Forces of the United States who are on active duty and stationed at a military installation in another state which has a specific nexus to this State; and veterans of the Armed Forces of the United States who were honorably discharged and who were on active duty while stationed at a military installation in this State or a military installation in another state which has a specific nexus to this State.

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

**Votes:** Passed both Houses unanimously

**Effective Date:** July 1, 2017

**Status:** Signed into law by the Governor

**NDVS Director's Plan for Implementation:** NDVS will update its Veteran Service Officer and Nevada Veteran Advocate training and its benefits website by October 1, 2017 to provide information on these changes to help educate the veterans community.

✓ **AB 77:** Revises provisions related to teachers and other educational personnel. AB 77 revises and proposes many provisions related to teacher licensing and qualifications. AB 77 has been amended, in Section 24, to allow Nevada Department of Education (NDE) to waive any licensure fees for veterans, active-duty members of the military, and spouses of military members.

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

**Votes:** Passed Assembly 37-5, Senate 18-2 with 1 excused

**Effective Date:** July 1, 2017

**Status:** Signed into law by the Governor

**NDVS Director's Plan for Implementation:** NDVS will update its Veteran Service Officer and Nevada Veteran Advocate training and its benefits website by October 1, 2017 to provide information on these changes to help educate the veterans community.

✓ **AB 105:** Amends NRS relating to physicians, physician assistants, medical assistants, professionals and practitioners of respiratory care. This bill requires two hours of continuing education instruction on evidence-based suicide prevention and awareness at regular intervals.

**Sponsor(s):** Assemblyman Thompson.

**Votes:** Passed Assembly 39-3, Senate unanimously

**Effective Date:** July 1, 2017

**Status:** Signed into law by the Governor

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

✓ **AB 118:** Authorizes a person who is at least 18 years of age but less than 21 years of age to be eligible for a permit to carry a concealed firearm if the person provides certain proof that he or she is a member of the Armed Forces of the United States, a reserve component thereof or the National Guard; or was discharged or released from service therein under honorable conditions. This bill also requires a sheriff to deny an application for a permit or revoke an existing permit if the sheriff determines that the applicant has been discharged or released from service in the Armed Forces of the United States, a reserve component thereof or the National Guard under conditions other than honorable conditions and is less than 21 years of age.

**Sponsor(s):** Assemblyman Daly

**Votes:** Passed Assembly 34-4, 4 excused, Senate unanimously, 1 excused

**Effective Date:** July 1, 2017

**Status:** Signed into law by the Governor

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

✓ **AB 282:** Authorizes service members who receive military orders to relocate or deploy to terminate or suspend a contract. AB 282 allows a military service member to submit a written notice of permanent change of duty or deployment orders (of more than 30 days) to terminate or suspend a contract for telecommunication services, internet services, membership of a health club, or video service. This bill requires that the service member submit a written notice to the service provider within 90 days of the termination date and the service member must not be charged a penalty, fee, or loss of deposit because of the termination. Lastly, the bill authorizes a service member or the Attorney General to bring an action against a person who violates the provision of this bill.

**Sponsor(s):** Assemblyman Elliot Anderson

**Votes:** Passed Assembly unanimously, Senate unanimously, 1 excused

**Effective Date:** July 1, 2017

**Status:** Signed into law by the Governor



**NDVS Director's Plan for Implementation:** NDVS will update its Veteran Service Officer and Nevada Veteran Advocate training and its benefits website by October 1, 2017 to provide information on these changes to help educate the veterans community.

✓ **AB 286:** Revises provisions relating to court programs for the treatment of veterans and members of the military. AB 286 establishes qualifications for a defendant eligible for participation in a veterans court program and authorizes justice and municipal courts to establish programs for the treatment of veterans and members of the military who are charged with first misdemeanor offenses, to include battery constituting domestic violence or driving under the influence of alcohol or drugs. The court must attempt to determine whether a defendant qualifies for the program as soon as possible after the person is arrested or cited. AB 286, as amended, establishes that defendants charged with domestic violence or DUI offenses are eligible for treatment program on first offense only, and charges are conditionally dismissed upon successful completion. The original charge is conditionally dismissed to be used only for the purpose of enhancement for a secondary offense within the seven years of conditional dismissal.

**Sponsor(s):** Assemblyman Elliot Anderson and Senator Cannizzaro

**Votes:** Passed Assembly unanimously, Senate unanimously, 1 excused

**Effective Date:** June 8, 2017

**Status:** Signed into law by the Governor

**NDVS Director's Plan for Implementation:** NDVS will update its Veteran Service Officer and Nevada Veteran Advocate training and its benefits website by October 1, 2017 to provide information on these changes to help educate the veterans community.

✓ **AB 309:** Changes preferences for veterans in state employment. Section 3 requires the Administrator of the Division of Human Resources Management to submit a monthly report listing the names of all veterans and widows and widowers of persons killed on active duty who are employed in the classified or unclassified service of the state. It further requires the Administrator to ensure that the percentage of officers and employees in such state employment that are veterans and to the extent the information is available, widows and widowers of persons killed in the line of duty while on active duty in the Armed Forces of the United States, is proportional to the percentage of veterans and, to the extent the information is available, such widows and widowers, who reside in this State and are in the labor force. This also provides that 10 preference points must be added to the passing grade of all veterans and to the passing grade of widows and widowers of persons killed in the line of duty while on active duty in the Armed Forces of the United States and also provides that a person who qualifies under more than one category for preference points cannot combine all those points but is entitled to receive points for only one qualifying category that is most beneficial to the person. Finally, the bill removes the restriction on applying such preference points to more than one promotional examination. The bill also requires the

Administrator to certify additionally for the position the name of any veteran with a service-connected disability who is also on the list of eligible persons and, if so certified, the appointing state agency must interview the veteran for the position.

**Sponsor(s):** Assemblymen Cohen, Miller, Yeager, Watkins and Frierson; Senators Spearman and Parks

**Votes:** Passed Assembly unanimously, 3 excused, Senate unanimously

**Effective Date:** October 1, 2017

**Status:** Signed into law by the Governor

**NDVS Director's Plan for Implementation:** NDVS will update its Veteran Service Officer and Nevada Veteran Advocate training and its benefits website by October 1, 2017 to provide information on these changes to help educate the veterans community.

✓ **AB 337:** Prevents unlawful termination of a National Guard member. The bill expands existing law by prohibiting the employer of a member of the National Guard of another state who is employed in this State from terminating the member's employment because he or she is ordered to active service or otherwise required by the law of that state to perform duties as a member of the National Guard of that state. It also provides that if, for any reason the Labor Commissioner does not determine that the employment of a member of the Nevada National Guard or the National Guard of another state was terminated unlawfully, the member may bring a civil action in district court against his or her employer seeking such a determination. Section 3 of this bill provides that if the Labor Commissioner determines that the employment of a member of the Nevada National Guard or the National Guard of another state was terminated unlawfully, the member is entitled to: immediate reemployment in the position in which he or she would have been employed if his or her continuous employment with the employer had not been unlawfully terminated; immediate restoration to the seniority and benefits to which he or she would have been entitled if his or her continuous employment with the employer had not been unlawfully terminated; and receipt of all wages and benefits lost as a result of the termination. Section 3 also requires the award of attorney's fees and costs to the member under certain circumstances.

**Sponsor(s):** Assemblyman Elliot Anderson

**Votes:** Passed Assembly unanimously 1 excused, Senate unanimously

**Effective Date:** July 1, 2017

**Status:** Signed into law by the Governor

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

✓ **AB 521:** Establishes a program for relocating a veteran's remains to a veteran's

cemetery. AB 521 establishes a program to provide financial assistance for the disinterment and relocation of a veteran to any veterans' cemetery. This bill also requires the Director of the Department of Veterans Services to adopt regulations prescribing the application process and the criteria for the award of such financial assistance. Finally, this bill makes an appropriation of \$100,000 to fund the program.

**Sponsor(s):** Assemblyman Paul Anderson

**Votes:** Passed Assembly unanimously, 3 excused, Senate unanimously

**Effective Date:** July 1, 2017

**Status:** Signed into law by the Governor

**NDVS Director's Plan for Implementation:** NDVS will develop a regulation prescribing the application process and the criteria for the award by January 1, 2018. Once developed, this information will be placed on the Nevada Veterans Memorial Cemetery web pages and on the NDVS benefits and services page.

✓ **SB 7:** Revises provisions of the Nevada Code of Military Justice governing certain offenses subject to court-martial proceedings. SB 7 removes the requirement that an offense must be committed while the person was in a duty status. Instead, it provides that the offense is subject to the Code when committed while the person was subject to jurisdiction under certain provisions of the Code.

**Sponsor(s):** Introduced by the Senate Committee on Government Affairs on behalf of the Governor.

**Votes:** Passed both Houses unanimously, 3 excused in the Assembly

**Effective Date:** May 18, 2017

**Status:** Signed into law by the Governor

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

✓ **SB 33:** Prohibits the foreclosure of a military service member's residential mortgage loan, including the foreclosure of a lien against a unit in a common-interest community, while the member is on active duty, and for one year immediately following active duty, without a court order, so long as the loan was entered into before the service member was called to active duty or deployed.

**Sponsor(s):** Introduced by the Senate Committee on Judiciary on behalf of the Governor

**Votes:** Passed both Houses unanimously

**Effective Date:** May 29, 2017

**Status:** Signed into law by the Governor

**NDVS Director's Plan for Implementation:** NDVS will update its Veteran Service Officer and Nevada Veteran Advocate training and its benefits website by October 1, 2017 to provide information on these changes to help educate the veterans community.

✓ **SB 58:** Adds the Administrator of the Division of Human Resource Management of the Department of Administration as a member of the Interagency Council on Veterans Affairs. Directs NDVS to aid, assist and cooperate not only with nationally recognized service organizations, but also with state veterans service organizations. The bill also increases the number of members on the Veterans Service Commission to 11, by adding a member who is also a member of the Women Veterans Advisory Committee and a member who is a student veteran pursuing a baccalaureate or higher degree in Nevada. The bill further authorizes the appointment of representatives of veterans' organizations recognized in Nevada as Commission members who are required to be representatives of veterans' organizations. Finally, the bill clarifies that the veterans' organizations from which those members of the Advisory Committees are appointed are organizations that are recognized nationally and in this State.

**Sponsor(s):** Introduced by the Senate Committee on Government Affairs on behalf of the Governor.

**Votes:** Passed both Houses unanimously, 1 excused in the Assembly

**Effective Date:** July 1, 2017

**Status:** Signed into law by the Governor

**NDVS Director's Plan for Implementation:** NDVS will identify state-level veterans service organizations and add them to the list of National Veterans Service organizations that we routinely coordinate with. Contact each of these organizations to determine the best way to aid, assist and cooperate with them.

✓ **SB 70:** Relates to policies protecting personal military-related property that is left at military/veteran memorials in Nevada. SB 70 revises provisions governing the management of military artifacts, expanding NRS 417.090 (9) to allow NDVS to transfer abandoned or unclaimed property to the Nevada State Museum or the Nevada Historical Society, or any other suitable state, federal, or non-profit entity. Additionally, language adds protections for NDVS against action for transfer, disposal, or destruction of any property. Finally, the bill requires NDVS to establish and publish on their website, the policies for disposal of such property when they are not transferred.

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

**Votes:** Passed both Houses unanimously, 1 excused in the Assembly

**Effective Date:** March 15, 2017

**Status:** Signed into law by the Governor

**NDVS Director's Plan for Implementation:** Establish and publish the new policy on transfer and disposal of abandoned property by October 1, 2017.

✓ **SB 137:** Requires that state agencies who collect information on veterans revise how they ask an individual about veteran status. SB 137 requires that the forms to collect veterans status information should ask whether the person served in the Armed Forces, the National Guard or reserve component for six continuous years, or Commissioned Corps of the United States Public Health Service or the Commissioned Corps of the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration instead of simply asking if the person is a veteran. Lastly, SB 137 removes the expiration date of the gift account managed by the Director of the Nevada Department of Veteran Services and the requirement to assist veterans who have suffered military sexual trauma.

**Sponsor(s):** Senators Woodhouse, Spearman, Parks, Hardy, and Ford

**Votes:** Passed both Houses unanimously, 2 excused in the Assembly, 1 in the Senate

**Effective Date:** June 4, 2017

**Status:** Signed into law by the Governor

**NDVS Director's Plan for Implementation:** All NDVS forms that collect veterans status information will be modified to ask whether the person served in the Armed Forces, the National Guard or reserve component for six continuous years, or Commissioned Corps of the United States Public Health Service or the Commissioned Corps of the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration instead of simply asking if the person is a veteran.

✓ **SB 141:** Provides for the issuance of special license plates inscribed with the international symbol of access to a veteran with a qualifying service-connected disability and establishes a definition for a "qualifying service connected disability," for the purposes of qualifying disability rating to receive a special veteran's license plate with the international symbol of access. "Qualifying service-connected disability" means: a service-connected disability rated at 100 percent; more than one service-connected disability, the combined ratings of which add up to at least 100 percent; or a service-connected disability of any rating that constitutes or includes a permanent disability that qualifies a person for a special license plate pursuant to NRS 482.384.

**Sponsor(s):** Senator Hardy

**Votes:** Passed both Houses unanimously

**Effective Date:** July 1, 2017. Sections 3 and 5 to 8, inclusive, of this act become effective on the earlier of July 1, 2018 or when sufficient resources become available

**Status:** Signed into law by the Governor

**NDVS Director's Plan for Implementation:** NDVS will update its Veteran Service Officer and Nevada Veteran Advocate training and its benefits website by October 1, 2017 to provide information on these changes to help educate the veterans community.

✓ **SB 144:** Revises several provisions regarding elections, including automatic voter registration. Among its provisions, this bill expands provisions of military-overseas ballots and requires the Secretary of State to establish an online voter registration.

**Sponsor(s):** Senator Spearman

**Votes:** Passed both Houses unanimously

**Effective Date:** July 1, 2017

**Status:** Signed into law by the Governor

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

✓ **SB 148:** Requires the Director of the Department of Veterans Services to provide assistance and information relating to aid, benefits and services to veterans and members of the military who are lesbian, gay, bisexual or transgender and their spouses and dependents and further requires the Director to assist a veteran who is lesbian, gay, bisexual or transgender in applying for an upgrade to the character of the veteran's discharge from service or a change in the narrative reason for the veteran's discharge from service. This bill also prohibits the denial of a veteran's eligibility for any program, service, benefit, activity or facility of this State, or subdivision thereof, for which the veteran would otherwise be eligible solely on the basis of the veteran's status as a discharged veteran who is lesbian, gay, bisexual or transgender.

**Sponsor(s):** Senator Spearman

**Votes:** Passed both Houses unanimously; 3 excused in the Assembly

**Effective Date:** July 1, 2017

**Status:** Signed into law by the Governor

**NDVS Director's Plan for Implementation:** Create a one-year contracted program manager position to develop an LGBTQ outreach and education plan by October 1, 2017; implement the plan with partners by August 1, 2018.

✓ **SB 191:** Establishes a standard for evidence of eligibility for any benefit, program or assistance provided to a veteran with a service-connected disability. SB 191 amends

NRS by establishing what documents are acceptable to be deemed a service-connected disabled veteran when seeking any assistance provided, whether by state or local government. This bill proposes that a veteran is deemed a service-connected disabled veteran by proof of a certificate from the U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs or U.S. Department of Defense that indicates the veteran has incurred a service-connected disability and indicates the total disability compensation. Sections 2 to 8 amend NRS to make conforming changes to the veterans' related provision relating to Purchasing, Public Works, Department of Motor Vehicles (DMV) license plates, and Wildlife (hunting and fishing licenses and tags).

**Sponsor(s):** Senator Cannizzaro

**Votes:** Passed both Houses unanimously, 3 excused in the Assembly

**Effective Date:** Sections 1, 2, 3, 5, 7, 8 and 9 of this act become effective May 29, 2017. Sections 4 and 6 of this act become effective on the earlier of: July 1, 2018; or the date on which the Director of the Department of Motor Vehicles, pursuant to section 7 of chapter 62, Statutes of Nevada 2015, at page 268, notifies the Governor and the Director of the Legislative Counsel Bureau that sufficient resources are available to enable the Department to carry out the amendatory provisions of chapter 62, Statutes of Nevada 2015, at page 262.

**Status:** Signed into law by the Governor

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

✓ **SB 326:** Provides enrollment preference in a day care facility to dependents of military members. It requires a child care facility, before granting admission to any other child, to grant admission to a child whose: parent or guardian is currently serving on active duty in the Armed Forces of the United States; parent was killed or died as a direct result of injuries received while serving honorably on active duty in the Armed Forces of the United States; or parent is currently or was recently missing in action or a prisoner of war.

**Sponsor(s):** Senate Committee on Health and Human Services

**Votes:** Passed both Houses unanimously, 1 excused in the Assembly

**Effective Date:** July 1, 2017

**Status:** Signed into law by the Governor

**NDVS Director's Plan for Implementation:** NDVS will update its Veteran Service Officer and Nevada Veteran Advocate training and its benefits website by October 1, 2017 to provide information on these changes to help educate the veterans community.

✓ **SB 444:** Makes an appropriation to the Department of Veterans Services. SB 444

proposes to appropriate \$349,962 to the NDVS to provide financial assistance and support for the Adopt a Vet Dental Program.

**Sponsor(s):** Senate Committee on Finance

**Votes:** Passed both Houses unanimously

**Effective Date:** July 1, 2017

**Status:** Signed into law by the Governor

**NDVS Director's Plan for Implementation:** NDVS will establish authority in the Department operating account to provide funding to the Adopt a Vet Dental Program; once established transfer funds to the Adopt a Vet Dental Program administrator on a quarterly basis.

✓ **SB 445:** Makes an appropriation to the Eighth Judicial District Court. SB 445 proposes to appropriate from the State General Fund to the Eighth Judicial District Court of the State of Nevada the sum of \$98,356 for the salary of a Veterans Court Coordinator.

**Sponsor(s):** Senate Committee on Finance

**Votes:** Passed Assembly 41-1, Senate unanimously

**Effective Date:** July 1, 2017

**Status:** Signed into law by the Governor

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

✓ **SB 457:** Requires the Board of Regents or its designee to consult with the State approving agency designated pursuant to federal law and the American Council on Education to establish statewide standards for awarding credit for military education, training or occupational experience. This bill also requires that credit earned by a student for military education, training or occupational experience must be applicable toward the course work required of the student for the award of an associate's degree, baccalaureate degree or certificate at any university, state college or community college in the Nevada System of Higher Education.

**Sponsor(s):** Senator Parks

**Votes:** Passed both houses unanimously

**Effective Date:** July 1, 2017

**Status:** Signed into law by the Governor

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



✓ **SB 546:** CIP Bill including the Northern Nevada Veterans Home. (\$33,059,672)

**Sponsor(s):** Senate Committee on Finance

**Votes:** Passed Assembly 34-8, Senate 15-6

**Effective Date:** June 16, 2017

**Status:** Signed into law by the Governor

**NDVS Director's Plan for Implementation:** Support State Public Works Division in overseeing construction of the Northern Nevada Veterans Home (NNVH). Develop and implement plans to equip, staff, and operate the NNVH prior to January 1, 2020.

### **LEGISLATION NOT PASSED**

✗ **AB 336:** Required the warden of certain prisons to: (1) determine and report to the Director of the Department of Corrections certain information regarding the educational needs and vocational skills of offenders who are veterans; and (2) establish, improve and expand programs of educational development and workforce development to more effectively serve those offenders. This bill also requires the Director to align offenders who are veterans with educational needs and vocational skills with compatible programs of educational development and workforce development.

**Sponsor(s):** Assemblyman Edwards

**Votes:** Not voted upon

**Effective Date:** Not applicable

**Status:** Failed by deadline

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

✗ **SB 329:** SB 329 was an omnibus marijuana bill. Veterans were interested in adding Post Traumatic Stress Disorder to the list of recognized disabilities that qualify for a medical marijuana card.

**Sponsor(s):** Senator Segerblom

**Votes:** Not voted upon

**Effective Date:** Not applicable

**Status:** Failed by deadline

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

**✘ SB 449:** SB 449 was a Veterans Court bill. The sponsor met with Assemblyman Elliot Anderson and the two bills were merged into AB 286, which is now law.

**Sponsor(s):** Senator Cannizzaro

**Votes:** Senate unanimously, House did not vote as SB449 was merged into AB 286

**Effective Date:** Not applicable

**Status:** Failed by deadline

