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**2022 Veterans Legislative Symposia Report
April 1, 2022**

1. Purpose: This report presents recommendations gathered from Nevada's Veterans Community for consideration by the Governor and the Nevada State Legislature.

2. Background:

a. The Nevada Department of Veterans Services (NDVS) partnered with Nevada's United Veterans Legislative Council (UVLC) to host Veterans Legislative Symposia in March of 2022.

(1) 76 participants representing 16 different veterans' organizations attended the 19 March 2022 Las Vegas Symposium.

(2) 85 participants representing 16 different veterans' organizations attended the 26 March 2022 Reno Symposium.

b. The purpose of Nevada's Veterans Legislative Symposia is to bring together representatives from the Nevada veteran's community to develop legislative recommendations for the upcoming legislative session. The results of these symposia are compiled into a report and presented to the Governor and to members of the Nevada Legislature.

c. While the purpose of the Symposia is to identify issues that might be addressed by the State of Nevada Legislature, issues are often raised that can be addressed by the Governor or by State of Nevada Agencies. These issues are referred to the appropriate State authority. Additionally, any Federal issues raised by participants are presented to members of Nevada's Congressional delegation for their review and consideration.

d. The symposia both started with opening remarks by NDVS Director Kat Miller, who explained the symposia purpose and agendas. In Reno, participants also heard from Mr. Cesar Melgarejo, Senior Policy Analyst with the Legislative Counsel Bureau (LCB), and State Assemblymembers Jim Wheeler, Phillip K. "PK" O'Neil, and Sarah Peters. Las Vegas participants received presentations from Mr. Jose Torres-Landeros,

LCB Research Policy Analyst, State Senators Joe Hardy and Pat Spearman, and Assembly member Brittney Miller. The participating state legislators provided invaluable insight regarding how veterans could effectively participate during the upcoming session. Additionally, Nevada Congressman Steven Horsford presented information regarding citizen participation at the federal level.

e. The opening portion of both symposia concluded with remarks by ULVC Chairman Andy LePeilbet and Secretary Tony Yarbrough, who invited the audience to consider participation in the UVLC, and how the impact of joint action can positively impact legislative outcome.

f. Following the opening sessions, the floor was opened to veterans to present their individual or organizational issues or concerns. In advance of the Symposia, recommendations were gathered from the Interagency Council on Veterans Affairs (ICVA), the Nevada Veterans Services Commission (VSC), and the Women Veterans Advisory Committee (WVAC) for consideration at the symposia. During the symposia, additional recommendations were made by participants. All these recommendations were prioritized by attendees; each attendee was allowed to make five votes, with additional votes taking place to break ties.

3. **2022 Veterans Legislative Symposia Outcomes:**

a. 71 state issues were identified and prioritized across both symposia; some issues were identical in the Las Vegas and Reno events, resulting in a final total of 47 unique state recommendations. (Enclosure A).

b. 14 Federal issues were identified and will be referred to Nevada's Federal Delegation for consideration (Enclosure B).

c. There were several common themes that emerged from the recommendations. These themes, in priority order, were:

THEME 1: Improve medical and mental health care programs, especially those associated with dental health and suicide prevention.

THEME 2: Require service providers to implement the, "Ask the Question" Program to both improve veterans' health care outcomes, and to inform them of earned benefits.

THEME 3: Honor and recognize veteran's service by reducing certain state fees, offering veterans preferences, and providing medical time off for veterans employed by the State of Nevada.

THEME 4: Improve occupational licensure for veterans and military spouses

THEME 5: Improve programing for veterans in / transitioning from justice system

d. Finally, some of the issues raised by participants did not have broad support by participants, but they might be representative of issues or concerns of veterans not present so while they may not be statistically relevant, they are worth reviewing.

4. For additional information, please contact Director Kat Miller at millerk@veterans.nv.gov or Deputy Director Fred Wagar at wagarf@veterans.nv.gov.

Encl:

A: 2022 Veterans Legislative Symposia Results, State Issues

B: 2022 Veterans Legislative Symposia Results, Federal Issues

ENCLOSURE A
2022 Veterans Legislative Symposium (State Issues)
 48 Issues for Consideration by the Governor, State Legislature,
 and Federal Representatives

Item #	Priority #	11 Prioritized List of Issues Considered Most Critical by Nevada's State Veterans Service Organizations
1	1	The State of Nevada should continue funding for Adopt-A-Vet Dental Program.
2	2	The State of Nevada should employ a Veterans Suicide Prevention Manager.
3	3	Nevada should adopt the New Hampshire "Ask the Question" Program, requiring service providers ask patients if they served in the military.
4	4	The State of Nevada and the U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs should study the use of effectiveness and potential licensing of HBOT treatment.
5	5	The State of Nevada should offer competitive wages to State Veterans Memorial Cemetery employees.
6	6	The State of Nevada should eliminate annual license fees for officers and registered agents of Veterans Service Organizations.
7	7	The State of Nevada should create an additional sick leave category for veterans who are new State employees and have not yet accrued sufficient sick leave time to attend health care appointments associated with military service.
8	8*	The State of Nevada should reduce or eliminate business license fees for veteran owned businesses.
9	8*	The State of Nevada should remove occupational licensing barriers for military, veterans, and their spouses.
10	9*	The State of Nevada should continue the Military Sexual Trauma training program.
11	9*	The State of Nevada should create a hunting tag priority category of 50% or greater disabled veterans.

** The issues with an asterisk (*) were tied for eighth and ninth position, respectively.*

Item #	Priority #	Other issues raised by State Veterans Organizations in Priority Order
12	10	The State of Nevada should offer free legal representation for veterans that experience discriminatory acts at state and federal workplaces.
13	11	The State of Nevada should create a Military and Veterans Museum/fund a position for the museum.
14	12	The State of Nevada should operate veterans' adult day care health facilities.

Item #	Priority #	Other issues raised by State Veterans Organizations in Priority Order
15	12	The State of Nevada should eliminate licensure barriers for immigrant healthcare workers.
16	12	The State of Nevada should make annual recognition of Women's Military History Month permanent.
17	13	The State of Nevada should employ a Northern NV Veteran's outreach officer.
18	13	The State of Nevada should expand and make permanent the Nevada National Guard (NNG) Tax Holiday passed in the 81st Session to include NNG retirees, active-duty members, and veterans.
19	14	The State of Nevada should expand benefit information outreach to rural veterans.
20	14	The State of Nevada should Increase the number of mental health providers.
21	14	The State of Nevada should support incarcerated veterans' initiatives including establishing or maintaining NDOC's veterans' units.
22	14	The State of Nevada should extend tax exemptions to include disabled veterans with a "General under Honorable Conditions" discharge.
23	15	The State of Nevada Disabled Veterans license plate should indicate branch of service.
24	15	The State of Nevada should eliminate the \$450 state fee for spouse interment.
25	15	The State of Nevada should fund the Education & Information/Employment position as a state position.
26	15	The Nevada System of Higher Education should have tuition exemption for children of disabled veterans (sliding scale based on disability rating).
27	16	Veterans Courts should eliminate the requirement to keep records open for seven years; they should be closed immediately after successful graduation.
28	16	The State of Nevada should allow military service time to count for state employee retirement credit the same as is done for federal service.
29	16	The State of Nevada should create affordable housing preferences for disabled veterans.
30	16	The State of Nevada should acknowledge women veterans by naming roads, buildings, etc., after them.
31	17	The Office of the Attorney General should continue to Implement the Office of Military Legal Assistance Program for Veterans.

Item #	Priority #	Other issues raised by State Veterans Organizations in Priority Order
32	17	The State of Nevada should create veterans license plates with combat service designations, such as the Combat Action Badge.
33	17	The State of Nevada should encourage the USO to allow access to all veterans.
34	18	The State of Nevada should continue participation in SAMSA's Governor and Mayor's challenges – ICVA
35	18	The State of Nevada should continue to develop the Nevada Veterans Information System (VIS)
36	18	The State of Nevada should fund travel for WVAC members for one committee meeting and one member to attend a National Women Veterans Conference.
37	18	The State of Nevada should renovate the Southern Nevada State Veterans Home.
38	18	The State of Nevada should develop rent control for disabled veterans.
39	19	NSHE should mandate veterans' specialty court training at the National Judicial College.
40	19	NSHE should not have a time limit for processing NNG tuition waivers.
41	19	The State of Nevada should recognize global war on terrorism veterans with a dedicated day, a proclamation, etc.
42	19	The State of Nevada should require those who charge veterans for VA claims filing assistance to notify potential clients that the State of Nevada and certain national veterans service organizations offer these services at no charge.
43	19	The State of Nevada should continue to support "Missing in Nevada" missions at State Veterans Cemeteries.
44	19	The State of Nevada Support women veterans' registration at the National Military Women's Memorial.
45	19	The State of Nevada should adopt the use of a vehicle sticker or other indicator allowing veterans to use HOV lanes.
46	19	The State of Nevada should allow K-12 advanced enrollment with military orders.
47	20	The State of Nevada should construct a North Las Vegas Veterans Home on VA Hospital campus.

ENCLOSURE B
2022 Veterans Legislative Symposium (14 Federal Issues)

In Alphabetical Order (Not Prioritized) LV- Las Vegas, R- Reno
Community Care: The U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs should increase number of VA-approved community care providers. LV and R
Compensation Issue: The U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs should protect VA disability compensation for those who would lose them when accepting certain federal employment. LV
GWOT Recognition: Provide national recognition with a designated day and/or other for those who served during the global war on terrorism. R
Hiring Immigrant Workers: The U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs should eliminate barriers to hiring immigrant healthcare workers. LV
Hyperbaric oxygen therapy (HBOT): The U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs should study the use of effectiveness and potential licensing of Hyperbaric oxygen therapy (HBOT) treatment. LV and R
Legal Services: Federal and state agencies should provide free legal services to veterans that experience discrimination including sexual harassment, racism, and disability in their place of employment. LV
Medical Marijuana: The U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs should authorize use of medical marijuana in the VA medical system. LV
Mental Health Providers: The U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs should increase the number of mental health providers. LV
Name Change: DoD should allow veterans to change their DD-214 Discharge document when they have a name change. R
National Guard Insurance: If a member of the National Guard deploys and chooses TRICARE during the deployment, TRICARE coverage should continue after that deployment for a long enough period to allow the member to restart their private source insurance. R
Pension to Survivors: A veteran's pension should go to the survivor after his/her death. R
Pension War Time Requirement: The Pension Wartime requirement to earn a pension should be eliminated. LV and R
USO Issue: The Federal government should advocate for admission of all veterans into a U.S.O. LV
Women Veterans: The U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs should acknowledge, recognize, and honor women veterans by naming buildings, etc. after women warriors. R