

SENATE BILL NO. 268—SENATORS WOODHOUSE, FORD, SPEARMAN,
PARKS, KIHUEN; ATKINSON, DENIS, MANENDO AND
SEGERBLOM

MARCH 13, 2015

JOINT SPONSORS: ASSEMBLYMEN
SWANK, JOINER AND ARAUJO

Referred to Committee on Government Affairs

SUMMARY—Provides certain services for veterans.
(BDR 37-1042)

FISCAL NOTE: Effect on Local Government: No.
Effect on the State: Yes.

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EXPLANATION – Matter in *bolded italics* is new; matter between brackets ~~omitted material~~ is material to be omitted.

AN ACT relating to veterans; requiring the Department of Veterans Services to develop plans and programs to assist veterans who have suffered sexual trauma while on active duty or during military training; establishing an interim study to research issues relating to homeless veterans and veterans who have suffered sexual trauma while on active duty or during military training; and providing other matters properly relating thereto.

Legislative Counsel's Digest:

1 Existing law creates the Department of Veterans Services and requires the
2 Director and Deputy Director of the Department to undertake certain activities to
3 support veterans in this State. (NRS 417.020, 417.090) **Section 1** of this bill
4 requires the Director and Deputy Director to develop plans and programs to assist
5 veterans who have suffered sexual trauma while on active duty or during military
6 training.
7 **Section 2** of this bill establishes an interim study committee to research issues
8 related to: (1) veteran homelessness in this State; (2) the rate of unemployment of
9 homeless veterans in this State; and (3) veterans who have suffered sexual trauma
10 while on active duty or during military training.



* S B 2 6 8 *

THE PEOPLE OF THE STATE OF NEVADA, REPRESENTED IN
SENATE AND ASSEMBLY, DO ENACT AS FOLLOWS:

Section 1. NRS 417.090 is hereby amended to read as follows:

417.090 The Director and the Deputy Director shall:

1. Assist veterans, and those presently serving in the military and naval forces of the United States who are residents of the State of Nevada, their wives, widows, widowers, husbands, children, dependents, administrators, executors and personal representatives, in preparing, submitting and presenting any claim against the United States, or any state, for adjusted compensation, hospitalization, insurance, pension, disability compensation, vocational training, education or rehabilitation and assist them in obtaining any aid or benefit to which they may, from time to time, be entitled under the laws of the United States or of any of the states.

2. Aid, assist, encourage and cooperate with every nationally recognized service organization insofar as the activities of such organizations are for the benefit of veterans, servicemen and servicewomen.

3. Give aid, assistance and counsel to each and every problem, question and situation, individual as well as collective, affecting any veteran, serviceman or servicewoman, or their dependents, or any group of veterans, servicemen and servicewomen, when in their opinion such comes within the scope of this chapter.

4. Coordinate activities of veterans' organizations.

5. Serve as a clearinghouse and disseminate information relating to veterans' benefits.

6. Conduct any studies which will assist veterans to obtain compensation, hospitalization, insurance, pension, disability compensation, vocational training, education, rehabilitation or any other benefit to which veterans may be entitled under the laws of the United States or of any state.

7. Aid, assist and cooperate with the office of coordinator of services for veterans created in a county pursuant to NRS 244.401.

8. Pay to each county that creates the office of coordinator of services for veterans, from state money available to him or her, a portion of the cost of operating the office in an amount determined by the Director.

9. Take possession of any abandoned or unclaimed artifacts or other property that has military value for safekeeping. The Director or Deputy Director may transfer such property to a veterans' or military museum.

10. Develop plans and programs to assist veterans who have suffered sexual trauma while on active duty or during military training.



* S B 2 6 8 *

1 **Sec. 2.** 1. The Legislative Commission shall appoint a
2 committee to conduct an interim study to research various issues
3 regarding veterans in this State.

4 2. The committee must be composed of six Legislators as
5 follows:

6 (a) Two members appointed by the Majority Leader of the
7 Senate;

8 (b) Two members appointed by the Speaker of the Assembly;

9 (c) One member appointed by the Minority Leader of the
10 Senate; and

11 (d) One member appointed by the Minority Leader of the
12 Assembly.

13 3. The Legislative Commission shall appoint a Chair and a
14 Vice Chair from among the members of the committee.

15 4. The members of the committee serve terms of 2 years,
16 beginning as soon as practicable on or after July 1, 2015, and ending
17 on June 30, 2017. Any vacancy occurring in the membership of the
18 committee must be filled in the same manner as the original
19 appointment not later than 30 days after the vacancy occurs.

20 5. The committee shall meet at least twice each year and may
21 meet at such further times as deemed necessary by the Chair.

22 6. A majority of the members of the committee constitutes a
23 quorum for the transaction of business, and a majority of those
24 members present at any meeting is sufficient for any official action
25 taken by the committee.

26 7. The committee shall comply with the provisions of chapter
27 241 of NRS, and all meetings of the committee must be conducted
28 in accordance with that chapter.

29 8. For each day or portion of a day during which a member of
30 the committee attends a meeting of the committee or is otherwise
31 engaged in the business of the committee, except during a regular or
32 special session of the Legislature, the member is entitled to receive
33 the:

34 (a) Compensation provided for a majority of the members of the
35 Legislature during the first 60 days of the preceding regular session;

36 (b) Per diem allowance provided for state officers generally; and

37 (c) Travel expenses provided pursuant to NRS 218A.655.

38 ➔ The compensation, per diem allowances and travel expenses of
39 the members of the committee must be paid from the Legislative
40 Fund.

41 9. The committee shall research:

42 (a) The number of homeless veterans in this State, including,
43 without limitation:



(1) An analysis of veterans in this State who are currently homeless or have been homeless within 5 years after being released from active duty service, broken down by gender; and

(2) Data on the number of children of homeless veterans in this State, including an analysis of the custodial status of such children and where they currently reside;

(b) The unemployment rate of homeless veterans in this State; and

(c) Issues relating to veterans in this State who have suffered sexual trauma while on active duty or during military training.

10. In carrying out its duties pursuant to this section, the committee may consult with natural persons and entities to include, without limitation:

(a) Persons and entities which advocate for the health, safety or well-being of persons who are homeless.

(b) Persons and entities which advocate for the health, safety or well-being of persons who have experienced sexual situations involving harassment, stress, threats or trauma.

(c) Representatives of the United States Department of Veterans Affairs.

(d) Persons and entities which advocate for the health, safety or well-being of current or former members of the Armed Forces of the United States.

(e) Representatives of the United States Department of Defense.

11. The committee shall submit a report of its findings, including, without limitation, any recommendations for legislation, to the Director of the Legislative Counsel Bureau for transmittal to the 79th Session of the Nevada Legislature.

12. As used in this section, "veteran" has the meaning ascribed to it in NRS 417.005.

Sec. 3. The Department of Veterans Services shall provide administrative and technical assistance to the committee appointed pursuant to section 2 of this act.

Sec. 4. The provisions of subsection 1 of NRS 218D.380 do not apply to any provision of this act which adds or revises a requirement to submit a report to the Legislature.

Sec. 5. This act becomes effective on July 1, 2015.

