

HB 2856 -1 STAFF MEASURE SUMMARY

House Committee On Veterans and Emergency Management

Prepared By: Cassie Passon, Counsel

Meeting Dates: 3/9, 3/16, 3/18

WHAT THE MEASURE DOES:

Directs Department of Veterans' Affairs to study and make recommendations regarding improvements to operations of department and submit report on its findings to Legislative Assembly by January 1, 2023.

ISSUES DISCUSSED:

- "Gut and stuff" amendment to add to statutory definition of veteran

EFFECT OF AMENDMENT:

-1 Replaces the measure. Requires veteran seeking preference in civil service hiring to provide evidence of eligibility for veterans' preference at the time of application. Adds federal form DD 214 and 215, official records of entitlements from the United States Department of Veterans Affairs, or any other documentation that demonstrates preference eligibility as evidence of eligibility. Requires public employer who does not interview veteran to provide veteran with written explanation of reasons interview was not granted. Expands definition of honorable conditions to include a character of service recognized as honorable by the United States Department of Defense, or a character of service that is recognized by the United States Department of Veterans Affairs as honorable for purposes of the department. Modifies definition of veteran to include people who served on order issued under Title 32 of the United States Code, outside of the continental United States, on domestic deployment for non-training purposes, or served under honorable conditions as a member of a reserve component.

BACKGROUND:

Under current law, public employers must grant preference to a veteran who applies for a vacant civil service position or who seeks promotion if they meet the minimum and special qualifications and if they successfully complete an initial screening or examination, or successfully complete a test used to establish eligibility for the position. A public employer shall appoint an otherwise qualified veteran or disabled veteran to a vacant position if the veteran's application examination, when combined with preference points, are equal to or higher than the results of other applicants. A veteran may request the public employer to provide, in writing, the employer's reasons for not hiring the veteran. The public employer may base a decision not to hire a veteran solely on the veteran's merits or qualifications with respect to the vacant position. Current law also requires public employers to interview every veteran applicant who meets the minimum and special qualifications and who provides evidence that they have the transferable skills required or requested by the public employer. Veterans who claim the preference requirements were violated may file a complaint with the Bureau of Labor and Industries.