

2019

Assembly Committee on Veterans Affairs, 2019 Legislative Summary

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Assembly Committee on Veterans Affairs
2019 Legislative Summary



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Cover Photo- A CH-47 Chinook helicopter assigned to the California Army National Guard's 1st Battalion, 126th Aviation Regiment, takes off with a water bucket attached at a helibase in Sutter Creek, California, April 27, 2019. California Army and Air National Guard helicopter units train annually with Cal Fire and the California Department of Forestry and Fire Protection. The partnership enhances the California aerial wildland firefighting capabilities. (U.S. Air National Guard photo by Tech. Sgt. Julianne M. Showalter)

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BILLS SENT TO GOVERNOR AND ENACTED RESOLUTIONS:

ASSEMBLY BILLS

AB 361 (Voepel)

Chapter 86, Statutes of 2019

Military Department: support programs.

Authorizes the Adjutant General California and the Military Department to enter into agreements with specified entities, including nonprofit and military or veteran foundations, to spend money from the California Military Department Support Fund, and to accept in-kind donations.

AB 368 (Quirk-Silva)

Chapter 284, Statutes of 2019

Southern California Veterans Cemetery.

Changes the specific Orange County location authorized in statute for a prospective Southern California Veterans Cemetery to either the Marine Corps Air Station El Toro or the Golf Course Site in the Orange County Great Park in the City of Irvine. This bill also requires the Department of Veterans Affairs to complete acquisition studies on both sites and consult with the Department of General Services to determine which site to pursue.

AB 498 (Weber)

Chapter 227, Statutes of 2019

Business licensing: fees: exemptions: veterans.

Exempts a veteran of the U.S. Armed Forces who has been honorably discharged and is a California resident from paying any state or local business license fees to license a business that sells or provides services, provided the veteran is the sole proprietor of the business.

AB 550 (Flora)

Vetoed

Veterans: Medical Foster Home Pilot Program.

Authorizes, as a pilot project until January 1, 2023, a United States Department of Veterans Affairs facility to establish medical foster homes for older and medically frail veterans that are not subject to licensure or regulation under the California Residential Care Facilities for the Elderly Act.

AB 653 (Bloom, Kamlager-Dove)

Chapter 263, Statutes of 2019

State armories.

Allows the state to lease a portion of the West Los Angeles Armory for as long as 25 years to Los Angeles County with the requirements that the lease to be at fair market value for a bridge housing program, that the initial lease will be for five years with the option for four extensions of five additional years each, and that the County, if it enters a lease, must pay the state Department of General Services for its costs related to the lease.

AB 761 (Nazarian)

Chapter 338, Statutes of 2019

State armories: homeless shelters.

This bill allows, at the sole discretion of the Adjutant General, the use of any armory deemed vacant by the California Military Department throughout the year by the county or city in which the armory is located for the purpose of providing temporary shelter from hazardous weather conditions for homeless persons.

AB 1365 (Committee on Veterans Affairs)

Chapter 689, Statutes of 2019

Disabled Veteran Business Enterprise Program.

Requires a California Disabled Veteran Business Enterprise Program awarding department to maintain all records of the information provided by the prime contractor pursuant to these provisions and to retain the records for a minimum of 6 years after collection. The bill would direct the awarding department to establish appropriate review procedures for those records to ensure the accuracy and completeness of the award amounts and paid amounts reported.

SENATE BILLS

SB 289 (Archuleta)

Chapter 846, Statutes of 2019

Medi-Cal: home and community-based services: military.

Requires an active duty military service member's dependent child or spouse, who is eligible, enrolled, or on the waiting list for specified Medi-Cal waiver programs, to retain eligibility or waiting list status if the military service member receives a military order to transfer to another state. Also authorizes a dependent child or spouse to apply for the specified waiver programs when a military service member residing in another state receives a military order to move to California.

SB 481 (Umberg)

Chapter 704, Statutes of 2019

State military: inspector general.

Requires the Inspector General be an advisor to the Governor and responsive to the Adjutant General, and also makes updates to the "California Military Whistleblower Protection Act" and includes disciplinary actions against any member of the department who intentionally violate such protections.

SB 644 (Glazer)

Chapter 602, Statutes of 2019

Tenancy: security deposit: service members.

Prohibits, with certain exceptions, active service members from having to pay a security deposit of more than one month's rent for an unfurnished rental property and two months' rent for a furnished rental property.

SJR 7 (Glazer)

Res. Chapter 102, Statutes of 2019

Military and veterans.

Urges the United States Congress to act favorably in regard to legislation to award the Congressional Gold Medal to the Merrill's Marauders.

BILLS IN LEGISLATURE:

The following bills, if enacted would do the following:

ASSEMBLY BILLS

AB 21 (Oberholte)

Driver's licenses: veteran designation.

Removes the one-time \$5 fee to a person applying for a driver's license or identification card with a veteran designation after July 1, 2020.

Assembly Com. on V.A. from committee: Do pass and re-refer to Com. on APPR. (Ayes 11. Noes 0.) (March 26). Re-referred to Com. on APPR. In committee: Set, first hearing. Referred to APPR. Suspense file. In committee: Held under submission (May 16).

AB 55 (Eduardo Garcia)

Department of Veterans Affairs: veterans' services.

Establishes a continuous appropriation – for each fiscal year commencing July 1, 2019 – of \$11 million from the General Fund to the Department of Veterans Affairs and makes it available for allocation to counties to fund the activities of county veterans service officers.

Assembly Com. on V.A. from committee: Do pass and re-refer to Com. on APPR. (Ayes 11. Noes 0.) (March 26). Re-referred to Com. on APPR. In committee: Set, first hearing. Referred to APPR. Suspense file. In committee: Held under submission (May 16).

AB 160 (Voepel)

Employment policy: voluntary veterans' preference.

Enacts the “Voluntary Veterans’ Preference Employment Policy Act” to authorize a private employer to establish and maintain a veteran’ preference employment policy.

In Senate. Read first time. To Com. on RLS. for assignment (March 23). Referred to Coms. on JUD. and V.A. (March 29). In committee: Set, first hearing. Failed passage. Reconsideration granted (July 2).

AB 200 (Patterson)

State veterans cemeteries: Hmong veterans.

Authorizes the remains of a person who was naturalized pursuant to the federal Hmong Veterans’ Naturalization Act of 2000, and who resided in the State of California at the time of the person’s death, be buried in a California state-operated veterans cemetery.

Referred to Assembly Committee on V.A. Coauthors revised (Feb 8).

AB 240 (Irwin)

Veterans' homes: lease of property.

Limits a lease of real property at a California Department of Veterans Affairs (CalVet) Veterans’ Home to five years, except under specified conditions, requires that any use of property at a Veterans Home meet specified criteria, including that it provides a benefit to the home and its members, and be governed by a written agreement.

In Senate, Read second time. Ordered to third reading (Sep 6). Ordered to inactive file at the request of Senator Archuleta (Sep 12)

AB 408 (Frazier)

Vehicles: disabled veterans.

Allows the Department of Motor Vehicles to accept a certificate certifying a veteran is disabled for the purpose of a disability license plate from a County Veteran Service Officer or the Department of Veteran Affairs. Expands the definition of disabled veteran to include a combined service-connected disability rating of 100 percent, or rated permanently and totally disabled based on individual employability.

Referred to Assembly Com. on V.A. In committee: Set, first hearing. Hearing canceled at the request of author. In committee: Set, second hearing. Testimony taken.

AB 694 (Irwin)

Veterans Housing and Homeless Prevention Bond Act of 2020.

Enacts the Veterans Housing and Homeless Prevention Bond Act of 2020 to authorize the issuance of bonds in an amount not to exceed \$600,000,000 to provide additional funding for the Veterans Housing and Homeless Prevention program. The California Housing Finance Agency, the Department of Housing and Community Development, and the Department of Veterans Affairs will coordinate to provide housing to veterans and their families pursuant to the Veterans Housing and Homeless Prevention Act of 2014

Referred to Senate Com. on Appr. In committee: Hearing postponed by committee. In committee: Referred to Appr. Suspense file. In committee: Held under submission.

AB 1376 (Ramos, Reyes)

Civil service: veterans' preference: background checks.

Requires a state agency that hires for a position in cybersecurity that requires a background check to apply the veterans' preference and to establish a uniform hiring policy for veterans who have held a security clearance in the last year and have left the military in good standing or were honorably discharged.

Referred to Com. on Public Safety. In committee: Set, first hearing. Hearing canceled at the request of the author.

AJR 20 (Patterson)

State veterans cemeteries: Hmong veterans.

Urges the United States Congress and the President of the United States to permit states to extend burial and memorial benefits to Hmong veterans at state veterans cemeteries.

In Senate. Re-referred to Committee on V.A.

SENATE BILLS

SB 312 (Leyva)

Veterans: service dog assistance.

Requires the Department of Veterans Affairs, upon appropriation by the Legislature, to establish a competitive grant program to award grants to certified veteran service dog providers to provide assistance for the cost of service dogs to veterans with post-traumatic stress disorder.

Referred to Assembly Com. on V.A. Set for first hearing canceled at the request of author.

SB 500 (Morrell)

Veterans' education.

Requires the Department of Veterans Affairs to establish an education assistance program to provide housing and tuition assistance to disabled veterans attending graduate school in the State of California if their eligibility for federal education assistance has expired.

Referred to Assembly Committee on Appr. Set for first hearing. Placed on Appr. Suspense file. Held in committee and under submission.

SB 501 (Hurtado)

Armories: Reedley Armory.

Removes the Director of the Department of General Services authorization to sell the Reedley Armory.

Referred to Assembly Coms. On V.A. and A. & A.R. Set for first hearing canceled at the request of the author.

SB 663 (Jones)

Property taxation: exemptions: veterans' organizations.

Extends the application of the "veterans' organization" property tax exemption to real property owned by certain veterans' organizations and used for fraternal, lodge or social club purposes, as specified, excluding the bar area, for lien dates occurring between January 1, 2020, and December 31, 2029.

SB 725 (Rubio)

Veterans rental housing.

Requires the Department of Veterans Affairs to establish a rental housing assistance program to provide financial assistance to veterans seeking rental housing, based on the needs of the veterans. Requires the department to coordinate the program with existing state and federal veterans services and to provide detailed information about the program in a publication.