

HCS SB 656 -- VETERANS

SPONSOR: Cierpiot

COMMITTEE ACTION: Voted "Do Pass" by the Standing Committee on Veterans by a vote of 15 to 0. Voted "Do Pass" by the Standing Committee on Rules- Administrative Oversight by a vote of 10 to 2.

The following is a summary of the House Committee Substitute for SB 656.

GHOST ARMY RECOGNITION DAY (Section 9.305)

This bill designates every June 6th as "Ghost Army Recognition Day" in Missouri.

This provision is the same as a provision in HCS SS SCS SB 718 (2020).

BUDDY CHECK 22 DAY (Section 9.311)

This bill designates the 22nd day of each month as "Buddy Check 22 Day" to encourage citizens check in on veterans and to raise awareness of the problem of suicide facing military personnel.

This provision is the same as a provision in HCS SS SCS SB 718 (2020).

MISSOURI KOREAN WAR VETERANS MEMORIAL (Section 10.230)

This bill designates the Missouri Korean War Veterans Memorial located in Kansas City, Missouri as the official Korean War veterans memorial for the state of Missouri.

GOLD STAR MEMORIAL MONUMENTS (Section 10.237, 10.238, and 10.239)

This bill designates the Gold Star Families Memorial Monument at the College of the Ozarks, the Gold Star Memorial Monument and Pavilion at Jefferson Barracks Park, and the Gold Star Memorial Monument at the Missouri Capitol in Jefferson City as official Gold Star Memorial Monuments for the state of Missouri.

ATTORNEY GENERAL MILITARY PROGRAM (Section 27.115)

This bill requires the Attorney General to design, implement, and oversee a program to assist members of the military and their families in finding and retaining legal counsel. The program shall be marketed to attorneys in addition to military families and shall publicize pro bono legal services available to military families.

The Attorney General shall collaborate with the Missouri Bar in the administration of the program.

This provision is similar to HCS SS SCS SB 718 (2020).

TEACHER LICENSING FOR MILITARY SPOUSES (Section 168.021)

This bill provides that a provisional certificate issued to any qualified military spouse who is hired to teach in a Missouri public school is valid for three years. Additionally, within 30 days after receiving an application and of completion of the required background check, the State Board of Education shall issue a full certificate of license to a spouse of a member of the Armed Forces who meets certain residence requirements if all necessary fees are paid and all other licensing requirements are met.

This provision is similar to HCS SS SCS SB 718 and HB 1316 (2020).

STATE OMBUDSMAN & VETERANS' HOMES (Section 192.2305)

This bill authorizes the Office of State Ombudsman for Long-Term Care Facility Residents to receive, respond to, and resolve complaints made by or on behalf of residents of Missouri veterans' homes relating to the action, inaction, or decisions of providers or agencies affecting resident health, safety, welfare, or rights. The State Ombudsman or representatives of the Office, in addition to all current authority granted by state statute, shall have the authority to enter any veterans' home and have access to residents in a reasonable time and manner and have access to resident records with the permission of the resident or the resident's guardian. Additionally, the office shall analyze and monitor the development and implementation of federal, state, and local law and regulations regarding Missouri veterans' homes.

This provision is the same as SB 846 and a provision in HCS SS SCS SB 718 (2020).

DEVELOPMENTAL DISABILITY SERVICES FOR MILITARY FAMILIES (Section 208.151)

This bill provides that Missouri members of the Armed Forces and their immediate family shall have their eligibility for MO HealthNet developmental disability services temporarily suspended for any period of time during which such person temporarily resides outside of Missouri for reasons relating to military service. Upon returning to the state, the eligibility shall be immediately restored. If the military member or an immediate family member is not a legal resident of this state, but would otherwise be eligible for developmental disability services, the individual shall be

eligible for such services during the time in which the individual is temporarily present in Missouri for reasons relating to military service.

This provision is the same as a provision in HCS SS SCS SB 718 and substantially similar to a provision in HB 1316 (2020).

CHILD PROTECTION FOR MILITARY FAMILIES (Sections 210.109 and 210.150)

This bill requires the Children's Division to attempt to ascertain whether the suspected perpetrator or any person responsible for the care, custody, and control of a child is a member of the Armed Forces after receiving a report on alleged abuse or neglect of a child.

This bill allows appropriate staff of the United States Department of Defense to receive access to investigation records contained in the central registry of the Children's Division within the Department of Social Services and records maintained by the Children's Division following a report of child abuse and neglect in cases where the suspected perpetrator or any person responsible for the care, custody, and control of the subject child is a member of the Armed Forces.

Additionally, this bill requires the division to report findings in cases where the person responsible for the care, custody, and control of a child is a member of the Armed Forces to the most relevant family advocacy program or other relevant person authorized by the United States Department of Defense to receive reports.

These provisions are the same as a provision in HCS SS SCS SB 718 and substantially similar to provisions in HB 1316 (2020).

PURPLE HEART SPECIAL LICENSE PLATES (Section 301.451)

Currently, a recipient of the Purple Heart medal shall be charged only regular registration fees to be issued Purple Heart special license plates from the Department of Revenue.

This bill exempts Purple Heart special license plates from vehicle registration fees for the first set of the plates issued to an eligible person.

Under the bill, any registered co-owner of the vehicle shall be entitled to use and renew the plates until he or she remarries, or for the rest of his or her life if he or she does not remarry.

These provisions are the same as provisions in HCS SB 686 and HCS HB 1800 (2020).

CENTRAL MISSOURI HONOR FLIGHT SPECIAL LICENSE PLATES (Section 301.3069)

This bill establishes a "Central Missouri Honor Flight" special license plate. The plate requires an annual emblem-use fee of \$25, paid to Central Missouri Honor Flight and to be used for financial assistance to transport veterans to Washington D.C. to view veteran memorials, in addition to the \$15 special personalized license plate fee and other requirements and fees as provided by law.

These provisions are the same as provisions in HCS SB 686, SCS HB 1963 and to provisions in HCS HB 1473 (2020).

MERITORIOUS SERVICE MEDAL SPECIAL LICENSE PLATES (Section 301.3159)

This bill establishes a "Meritorious Service Medal" special license plate. Applicants shall provide proof of having been awarded the medal as required by the Director of the Department of Revenue. There shall be an additional fee for issuance of the plates equal to the \$15 special personalized license plate fee. Meritorious Service Medal license plates shall not be transferable to any other person, except that any registered co-owner of the motor vehicle shall be entitled to operate the motor vehicle with such plates for the duration of the year licensed in the event of the death of the qualified person.

These provisions are the same as HCS SB 686, HB 2249, SCS HB 1963, and HCS HB 1473 (2020).

CONCEALED CARRY PERMITS FOR MILITARY MEMBERS (Section 571.104)

This bill authorizes an active military member of the armed forces to renew his or her permit to carry a concealed weapon by mail. A permit may be picked up in person or sent by certified mail.

This provision is the same as HB 2259 (2020) and HB 1160 (2019).

The following is a summary of the public testimony from the committee hearing. The testimony was based on the introduced version of the bill.

PROPONENTS: Supporters say that recognizing the Missouri Korean War Veterans Memorial located in Kansas City, Missouri as the official Korean War veterans memorial for the state of Missouri would assist the organization in fundraising efforts for its construction. Additionally, supports claimed that this the only

memorial to the Korean War in the state. It was also stated that the memorial should be recognized now considering that many veterans of the Korean War are passing away due to their age.

Testifying for the bill were Senator Cierpiot; Daniel L. Turner; Albert Lemieux; Missouri Korean Veterans Memorial; Debra Schultz; City of Kansas City; and Robert Kalkofen.

OPPONENTS: There was no opposition voiced to the committee.