

HCS SS SCS SB 912 -- MILITARY AFFAIRS

This bill modifies provisions relating to military affairs.

VETERAN SUICIDE (Section 42.022)

This bill requires the Missouri Veterans' Commission to review the provisions of the Commander John Scott Hannon Veterans Mental Health Care Improvement Act of 2019 and any regulations related to the Act. After review, the Commission, in collaboration with the Department of Mental Health, must provide recommendations and make efforts to adopt procedures, programs, treatment options, aid, and other assistance necessary to assist in the efforts to prevent veteran suicide.

The Commission must file a report with the Department of Public Safety and the General Assembly on the recommendations, implementation, and effectiveness of the Commission's efforts to prevent veteran suicide before July 1, 2025, and annually by July 1st.

These provisions are the same as provisions in SCS SB 734 (2024).

SERVICES FOR VETERANS BY STATE AGENCIES (Section 42.051)

Currently, state agencies must ensure that any form created or modified after August 28, 2021, that is used to collect data from individuals includes certain questions regarding veteran status and the provision of the agency's assistance and information on veteran services. This bill provides that state agencies must include the following questions on any form created or modified after August 28, 2024, that is used to interact with members of the public:

(1) Have you ever served on active duty in the Armed Forces of the United States and separated from such service under conditions other than dishonorable?

(2) If answering question (1) in the affirmative, would you like to receive information and assistance regarding veteran benefits and services? and

(3) If answering question (2) in the affirmative, may the agency share your contact information with the Missouri Veterans Commission to provide such information? General information may also be found on the Missouri Veterans Commission's website.

Every State agency will provide the contact information of those individuals answering question (3) in the affirmative to the

Missouri Veterans Commission within seven business days of receipt and provide the contact information in a format readily accessible by the Commission.

The bill requires that every State agency provides information regarding the agency's applicable veteran services and benefits in a format readily accessible and identifiable to individuals answering questions (1) and (2) in the affirmative and to the Commission. On January 1st of each year, the Commission will post a report on its website that includes the total number of individuals whose contact information has been submitted by each State agency to the Commission and the total number of individuals contacted as a result of the submission.

These provisions are the same as provisions in SCS SB 734 (2024).

OPERATION ENDURING FREEDOM, OPERATION FREEDOM'S SENTINEL, and OPERATION ALLIES REFUGE PROGRAM (Section 42.312)

This bill establishes a new medallion program, "Operation Enduring Freedom, Operation Freedom's Sentinel, and Operation Allies Refuge Program". The bill specifies that, any veteran who served on active duty during certain dates, is a legal resident of this State or was a legal resident at the time of discharge from military service, or was a Missouri National Guard member regardless of residency, is eligible for a medal of appreciation for service.

This provision is the same as a provision in HCS HB 1490 (2024) and HB 1496 (2024).

ELECTION JUDGES (Section 115.085)

Currently, only registered voters in this State are allowed to serve as election judges. This bill allows military service members on active duty in this State and nonresident military spouses to also serve as election judges.

This provision has an effective date of January 1, 2025.

This provision is the same as HB 2802 (2024), SCS SB 1415 (2024), and similar to SB 1435 (2024).

ARMED FORCES INCOME TAX DEDUCTION (Sections 143.174 and 143.175)

Currently an income tax deduction is authorized for active and reserve members of the Armed Forces for a percentage of the

taxpayer's income received as salary or compensation as a member of the Armed Forces. This bill includes in "salary or compensation" any signing bonus.

These provisions are the same as provisions in SCS SB 734 (2024).

EDUCATIONAL ASSISTANCE (173.239)

Currently, any Missouri National Guard member may be awarded an educational assistance grant to an approved public or private higher education institution. This bill provides that any Missouri National Guard member may be awarded, upon application before each semester, either a tuition and fee waiver for undergraduate courses at a postsecondary institution of higher education located in this State that directly receives funds appropriated by the General Assembly or a grant to certain eligible institutions as defined in the bill. The educational assistance must not exceed the lesser of the actual tuition charged at an institution where the member is enrolled or accepted for enrollment or the total of the number of credit hours taken multiplied by the average tuition cost per credit hour charged to a Missouri resident at the University of Missouri for attendance, with the average cost determined by the Missouri National Guard.

This provision is similar to a provision in SCS SB 1322 (2024), SCS HCS HB 1569 (2024), and HB 2166 (2024).

POW/MIA SSG PAUL HASENBECK MEMORIAL HIGHWAY (Section 227.854)

This bill designates the "POW/MIA SSG Paul Hasenbeck Memorial Highway" in Osage County. Costs for the designation shall be paid by the Department of Transportation.

These provisions are the same as HB 1908 (2024) and SB 1308 (2024).

DISABLED LICENSE PLATES AND WINDSHIELD PLACARDS (Section 301.142)

The bill provides that applicants for a disabled license plate or windshield placard who have presented proof of disability in the form of a statement from the United States Veterans' Administration verifying that the person is permanently disabled will not be required to provide a physician's statement of physical disability for issuance or renewal of the license plate or windshield placard.

The bill also allows individuals 75 or over renewing a disabled license plate or placard to do so without a physician's statement.

DRIVER'S LICENSES AND SPECIAL LICENSE PLATES (Sections 301.3030, 301.3061, 301.3180, and 302.188)

This bill specifies that special license plates involving military actions or personnel are not subject to a special fee for issuance or personalization of one set of the plates issued to each qualified applicant.

The bill requires that the Disabled American Veterans special license plate bear the emblem of the Disabled American Veterans organization and have an authorized Disabled American Veterans' slogan near the bottom of the plate, and removes from statute language specifically describing the emblem and slogan.

This bill creates an "Army of Occupation Medal" special license plate, available to recipients of the medal.

The bill adds to the list of documents accepted by the Department of Revenue for applicants to obtain a veteran designation on his or her driver's license. The statute is also modified so that the military discharge documents acceptable for this purpose are not limited to those specifically listed.

These provisions are the same as SB 1474 (2024).

CHILD CUSTODY (452.1200, 452.1202, 452.1204, 452.1206, 452.1208, 452.1210, 452.1212, 452.1214, 452.1216, 452.1218, 452.1220, 452.1222, 452.1224, 452.1226, 4452.1228, 452.1230, 452.1232, 452.1234, 452.1236, 452.1238, 452.1240, 452.1242, 452.1244, 452.1246, 452.1248, 452.1250, 452.1252, 452.1254, 452.1256, and 452.1258)

This bill establishes the "Uniform Deployed Parents Custody and Visitation Act".

This bill requires a deploying parent to notify the other parent, in a record, of a pending deployment not later than seven days after receiving notice of deployment unless reasonably prevented from doing so by the circumstances of service, and then the deploying parent must notify as soon as reasonably possible. Each parent must provide the other parent, in a record, with a plan for fulfilling that parent's share of custodial responsibility during deployment. Each parent must provide the plan as soon as reasonably possible after notification of deployment.

The bill specifies that in a proceeding for custodial responsibility of a child of a service member, a court may not consider a parent's past deployment or possible future deployment in itself in determining the best interest of the child but may

consider any significant impact on the best interest of the child of the parent's past or possible future deployment.

This bill explains the procedure in which the parents can enter into a temporary agreement that grants custodial responsibilities over the child during deployment. Such agreement will terminate after the deploying parent returns from deployment unless the agreement has been terminated before that time by court order or modification. If granted caretaking authority over the child by the temporary agreement, subject to the provisions in this bill, a nonparent has standing to enforce the agreement until it has been terminated by court order or by modification.

The bill specifies that the court procedures needed to file a motion to grant custodial responsibility as well as the procedure in which the temporary custodial responsibility agreement can be modified or terminated.

Unless a grant of caretaking authority to a nonparent is agreed to by the other parent, the granted authority is limited to an amount of time not greater than:

(1) The amount of time granted to the deploying parent under a permanent custody order, but the court may add unusual travel time necessary to transport the child; or

(2) In the absence of a permanent custody order that is currently in effect, the amount of time that the deploying parent habitually cared for the child before being notified of deployment, but the court may add unusual travel time necessary to transport the child.

After a deploying parent returns from deployment, until a temporary agreement or order for custodial responsibility is terminated, the court must issue a temporary order granting the deploying parent reasonable contact with the child unless it is contrary to the best interest of the child, even if the time of contact exceeds the time the deploying parent spent with the child before deployment.

If an agreement between the parties to terminate a temporary order for custodial responsibility has not been filed, the order terminates 60 days after the deploying parent gives notice to the other parent and any nonparent granted custodial responsibility that the deploying parent has returned from deployment.

This bill does not affect the validity of a temporary court order concerning custodial responsibility during deployment which was entered into before August 28, 2024.

This is the same as HB 1494 (2024).

MISSOURI VETERANS AND JOB OPPORTUNITY GRANT PROGRAM (620.3305)

This bill establishes the "Missouri Veterans and Job Opportunity Grant Program", and creates, in the State Treasury, the "Missouri Veterans and Job Opportunity Grant Program Fund".

Grants will be disbursed to eligible employers registered to do business in Missouri that have paid wages to any individual in a targeted group. At least 50% of the funds available during a fiscal year have to be reserved for eligible employers paying a qualified veteran.

An individual is a member of a targeted group if such individual is:

- (1) A qualified IV-A recipient;
- (2) A veteran;
- (3) A qualified ex-felon;
- (4) A designated community resident;
- (5) A vocational rehabilitation referral;
- (6) A qualified summer youth employee;
- (7) A qualified supplemental nutrition assistance program benefits recipient;
- (8) A qualified SSI recipient;
- (9) A long-term family assistance recipient; or
- (10) A qualified long-term unemployment recipient.