



MISSOURI HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
WITNESS APPEARANCE FORM

BILL NUMBER: HB 1988		DATE: 2/13/2024	
COMMITTEE: Veterans			
TESTIFYING: <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> IN SUPPORT OF <input type="checkbox"/> IN OPPOSITION TO <input type="checkbox"/> FOR INFORMATIONAL PURPOSES			
WITNESS NAME			
BUSINESS/ORGANIZATION:			
WITNESS NAME: EDWARD BIERMANN		PHONE NUMBER: 314-223-4753	
BUSINESS/ORGANIZATION NAME: MARINE CORPS LEAGUE JEFFCO DETACHMENT 707		TITLE: JR PAST COMMANDANT / HONOR GUARD COMMANDER	
ADDRESS: 2191 DOE RUN DR			
CITY: ARNOLD		STATE: MO	ZIP: 63010
EMAIL: edbiermann@yahoo.com	ATTENDANCE: Written	SUBMIT DATE: 2/12/2024 11:56 PM	

THE INFORMATION ON THIS FORM IS PUBLIC RECORD UNDER CHAPTER 610, RSMo.

I, Ed Biermann, am the Honor Guard Commander of Marine Corps League Jeffco Detachment 707 Funeral Honors Team. For the past couple of years we have been averaging over 300 Honors each year. We typically would have a least 4 members minimum per Funeral. It is an honor for us to be a part of this program. Every Veteran deserves a proper Military Burial and I am proud to say that we do it with honor. Our team has rarely turned down a funeral honors request. We take great pride on what we do, and we personally, won't accept any compensation for what we do. Best group of Marines I have ever served with. For the past 25 years VSO's are getting paid \$100 per funeral. The money we get from this program goes toward other veteran organizations, such as The "Semper Fi Fund", Focus Marines Foundation, Missouri Veterans Home, Folds of Honor, and local charities such as the Boy Scouts, Helping Hands and Horses, Ranken Jordan Pediatric Bridge hospital and more. Almost every dollar we earn goes back to other veteran organizations and local charities. We are happy to give! Our Detachment will pay for our required uniforms, but some of the members on our team purchase their own gear. Some of us pay for our own gas so it leaves the Detachment more money to support these other Charities. We pay for our own gas and fuel to travel to these funerals. If the Detachment was to pay for our mileage it would take thousands of dollars away from these charities. We have traveled more than 50 miles to do one funeral. Today 12 February we traveled 31 Miles from Arnold to Desoto to do a funeral and then to a second funeral that was 26 miles away to Barnhart and than back 10 miles to home. 67 Mile round trip. We had 6 Marines that volunteered and 4 vehicles involved in transportation. The reason we used 4 different vehicles is due to the fact that we all live in different parts of the county. We have traveled to Bonne Terre that is a 84 mile round trip for just one funeral. We sometimes are lucky enough to have \$25 gas cards donated to us for our fuel. Not often enough though. We pay for our own dry cleaning bill for our uniforms. One of our members almost quit the honors program because he was retired and didn't have the money for gas. Expenses are inflating and our members are picking up the expense. I seldom hear any complaining though. 25 Years ago prices were a lot different than they are today. Still the VSO's contribution cost them more and the compensation for each funeral has been the same \$100. Please look at it from where I'm sitting. 25 years without an increase appears that we have been forgotten. If there is anyway to find more money in the budget to support this program it would be greatly appreciated. What ever way this House Bill gets voted on, We will continue to do our job with respect, dignity, and honor. Thank You, Respectfully submitted by Ed Biermann



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WITNESS NAME		
INDIVIDUAL:		
WITNESS NAME: PAUL CAMPOS		PHONE NUMBER:
BUSINESS/ORGANIZATION NAME:		TITLE:
ADDRESS:		
CITY:		STATE: ZIP:
EMAIL: gunnycampos@gmail.com	ATTENDANCE: Written	SUBMIT DATE: 2/12/2024 12:58 PM
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I am a member of the South St. Louis Marine Corps League (the largest MCL in the state). We have performed over 10,000 funeral honors since year 2000. I am also part of the team that render honors for for veterans. We do the majority at Jefferson Barracks Cemetery but also at various cemeteries throughout the St. Louis area. Our team is one of two and is a five man team consisting of a team leader who greets the family, 3 man firing team and a bugler. We perform each funeral with pride and dedication regardless if there is only one or over a hundred of veterans family present. The funds we receive for from Honors is \$100 per honor. This the same amount we've received since the Honors program inception. The funds are used by our detachment to support our mission which is proving support for veterans and our community. We provide color guard details at local parades, we visit schools to talk to students about civil duty and patriotic service. We donate to other Veterans groups, provide emergency humanitarian aid to individuals just to name a few aspects of our mission. An increase of money we receive would be a huge benefit so we can continue our contribution to our community and veterans we serve. We enthusiastically support your sponsored bio 1988.



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WITNESS NAME			
INDIVIDUAL:			
WITNESS NAME: RICK FRAZIER		PHONE NUMBER:	
BUSINESS/ORGANIZATION NAME:		TITLE:	
ADDRESS:			
CITY:		STATE:	ZIP:
EMAIL: frazier3043@sbcglobal.net		ATTENDANCE: Written	SUBMIT DATE: 2/13/2024 12:50 PM

THE INFORMATION ON THIS FORM IS PUBLIC RECORD UNDER CHAPTER 610, RSMo.

Dear Honored Members of the House for the state of Missouri, As a member of the United States Marine Corps League 183 in St. Louis Missouri, I humbly implore you to vote yes for an increase in Military Honors. I have been active in this amazing endeavor to honor those who proudly served their country in all branches of the service. I was part of the 10,000 honors ceremony earlier this year and I can testify to the privilege it is to involved in this well earned ceremony to those who allow us to enjoy the freedom we have today. Before the start of the Honors Guard, these deserving women and men of our armed forces did not receive their due thanks. It has been 20+ years since the honors program started up and all of the VSO, veteran service organizations like the Marine Corps League, VFW and American Legion that perform them. We use a lot of the funds generated to help veterans in need, toys for tots and other charitable causes. It is time to raise the amount from \$100 to \$200 per honor to help us to help others. The tears of pride and thanks from the families of these hero's deserve this honor. Thank you for your consideration and patriotism. God Bless America and our veterans! Best regards, Rick FrazierMCL183



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WITNESS NAME		
INDIVIDUAL:		
WITNESS NAME: ARNIE C. "HONEST-ABE" DIENOFF-STATE PUBLIC ADVOCATE		PHONE NUMBER:
BUSINESS/ORGANIZATION NAME:		TITLE:
ADDRESS:		
CITY:		STATE: ZIP:
EMAIL: arniedienoff@yahoo.com	ATTENDANCE: Written	SUBMIT DATE: 2/13/2024 11:54 PM

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I am Opposed to this bill. This is a Duplication of Awards and Medals.



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WITNESS NAME		
INDIVIDUAL:		
WITNESS NAME: JOHN BOYER		PHONE NUMBER:
BUSINESS/ORGANIZATION NAME:		TITLE:
ADDRESS:		
CITY:		STATE: ZIP:
EMAIL: johnboyer0744@icloud.com	ATTENDANCE: Written	SUBMIT DATE: 2/13/2024 8:24 AM

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Veterans do not need more medals more recognition the few that served did it with honor, duty. The general public cannot understand the sacrifices that we endured. Only those brothers and sisters get thatWhat we need is more accountability more accessibility to mental health and health care. We needed to provide access to jobs for veterans to thrive instead of survivingWe need to support bills to end veterans suicide not bills to add more holidays for government employees to take off or celebrate with pay while citizens and veterans are left vulnerable Thank You



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WITNESS NAME		
INDIVIDUAL:		
WITNESS NAME: MICHELLE R BLUBAUGH		PHONE NUMBER:
BUSINESS/ORGANIZATION NAME:		TITLE:
ADDRESS:		
CITY:	STATE:	ZIP:
EMAIL: Michelleraevaughn@gmail.com	ATTENDANCE: Written	SUBMIT DATE: 2/8/2024 2:50 PM
THE INFORMATION ON THIS FORM IS PUBLIC RECORD UNDER CHAPTER 610, RSMo.		

Written testimony before chairman, rep. Dave Griffith, vice chairman rep. Herman Morse, and committee members. Testifying in opposition to House Bill 1988 for the public hearing taking place on February 13, 2024. I am Michelle Blubaugh, former active duty and now reserve Naval Aviation Electrician. I am a member of the funeral honors program at my local Navy Reserve Center. The costs associated with providing funeral honors is complex, and may differ depending on each situation. For the funeral itself there is a cost to maintain required uniforms and insignia, a cost for familial provisions (flag), and a cost for necessary equipment. The equipment needed depends on the detail, for example some have instruments, speakers, or rifles/ammunition. There is also a cost association with the participants such as transportation and pay. A funeral honor detail must have at least 3 people to be performed properly, and often include more for ceremonial purposes. The cost for transportation can weigh heavily on those providing to rural areas, I have on occasion, driven an hour and a half to perform funeral duties. My local Navy Reserve Center provides funerals almost everyday, and sometimes multiple times a day. Veteran organizations assist with providing many of these funerals. This is a salient issue as Missouri has the 16th highest veteran population in the country and makes up 7.1% of the population in Missouri. A flat rate of \$200 per service provision may result in less veteran organization participation in funeral honors, and may place a larger burden on local reserve centers. This bill would disproportionately impact rural areas in Missouri, as they may require more travel time. Veterans who honorably served their country deserve to be honored in death, and those who provide these services deserve to be properly compensated. Continue to allow the Adjutant General to make determinations on compensation based on all factors, rather than a flat rate to ensure any veteran living in Missouri's preferences for funeral honors are respected. My suggestion is that if this bill passes, to make the \$200 payment in addition to required equipment costs. This equipment may include flags provided for family, ammunition, and mileage compensation. Thank you for your time and consideration.



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WITNESS NAME			
BUSINESS/ORGANIZATION:			
WITNESS NAME: NICK HUMPHREY		PHONE NUMBER: 573-638-9754	
BUSINESS/ORGANIZATION NAME: MISSOURI NATIONAL GUARD		TITLE:	
ADDRESS: 2302 MILITIA DRIVE			
CITY: JEFFERSON CITY		STATE: MO	ZIP: 65101
EMAIL:	ATTENDANCE:	SUBMIT DATE: 2/13/2024 12:00 AM	
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