

HB 80 -- VETERANS

SPONSOR: Griffith

VETERANS BENEFITS ASSISTANCE (Section 42.028)

This bill specifies that, except as permitted under Federal law, no person can receive compensation for advising or assisting any individual with regard to any veterans benefits matter.

If someone is advising or assisting any individual with regard to any veterans benefits, he or she cannot guarantee that any individual will receive specific veterans benefits or that any individual is guaranteed to receive a specific level, percentage, or amount of veterans benefits. The individual who is providing the advising services must provide the following disclosure:

"This business is not sponsored by, or affiliated with, the United States Department of Veterans Affairs or the Missouri Veterans Commission, or any other Federally chartered veterans service organization. Other organizations, including, but not limited to, the Missouri Veterans Commission, your local veterans service agency, and other Federally chartered veterans service organizations, may be able to provide you with this service free of charge. Products or services offered by this business are not necessarily endorsed by any of these organizations. You may qualify for other veterans benefits beyond the benefits for which you are receiving services here."

This bill also prohibits any person from receiving compensation for referring any individual to another person to advise or assist the individual with veterans benefits.

Any person who violates the provisions of this bill can be found guilty of a class A misdemeanor.

VETERANS TRAUMATIC BRAIN INJURY TREATMENT AND RECOVERY (Section 191.2600 to 191.2630)

This bill establishes the "Veterans Traumatic Brain Injury Treatment and Recovery Act".

The bill creates the "Veterans Traumatic Brain Injury Treatment and Recovery Fund", which will reimburse facilities that provide hyperbaric oxygen therapy to veterans diagnosed with posttraumatic stress disorder or traumatic brain injury, and can be used to conduct studies on the use of alternative therapies for such conditions.

The bill specifies the eligibility criteria and requirements for veterans, facilities, and health care practitioners for reimbursement. The Missouri Veterans Commission must compile an annual report with data about the treatment of hyperbaric oxygen therapy and its effectiveness to the Governor, the President Pro Tem of the Senate, the Speaker of the House of Representatives, and the Director of the Department of Health and Senior Services. The information collected for the report is specified in the bill.

Any facility that intends to seek reimbursement under this Act for hyperbaric oxygen therapy provided to a veteran must request advance approval from the Missouri Veterans Commission. The facility cannot bill the veteran, but must submit the charges to the Commission, which will make payment within 45 days of receipt.

The bill grants the Missouri Veterans Commission and the Department of Health and Senior Services the authority to promulgate rules and regulations for the administration of the Act.

AFGHANISTAN AND IRAQ VETERAN LICENSE PLATES (Section 301.3181)

This bill creates special vehicle license plates for veterans who served in Afghanistan and Iraq.

The bill specifies that any recipient of the Afghanistan Campaign medal and the Iraq Campaign medal, and who is either currently serving or honorably discharged, can apply for the plates with the words "AFGHANISTAN & IRAQ VETERAN" by providing proof of service and paying a \$15 fee. The plates can be personalized at no extra cost. A recipient of the Afghanistan Campaign medal can apply for a license plate with the words "AFGHANISTAN VETERAN".

The bill states that there is no limit on the number of plates a person can obtain, however, the plates are not transferable.

This bill is similar to HCS HB 1490, contains provisions from HB 70, HB 116, HB 190 HB 483 , and HCS HB 496 (2024).