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State of Minnesota

HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

NINETY-THIRD SESSION

H. F. No. 656

01/23/2023 Authored by Pfarr, Newton, Wiens, Hudella and Olson, B., The bill was read for the first time and referred to the Committee on Veterans and Military Affairs Finance and Policy

1.1 A bill for an act
1.2 relating to veterans; expanding eligibility for the post-9/11 veterans bonus program;
1.3 amending Minnesota Statutes 2022, section 197.79, subdivisions 1, 2.

1.4 BE IT ENACTED BY THE LEGISLATURE OF THE STATE OF MINNESOTA:

1.5 Section 1. Minnesota Statutes 2022, section 197.79, subdivision 1, is amended to read:

1.6 Subdivision 1. Definitions. For purposes of this section, the following terms have the
1.7 meanings given them.

1.8 (a) "Applicant" means a veteran or a veteran's guardian, conservator, or personal
1.9 representative or a beneficiary or a beneficiary's guardian, conservator, or personal
1.10 representative who has filed an application with the commissioner for a bonus under this
1.11 section.

1.12 (b) "Application" means a request for a bonus payment by a veteran, a veteran's
1.13 beneficiary, or a veteran's guardian, conservator, or personal representative through
1.14 submission of written information on a form designed by the commissioner for this purpose.

1.15 (c) "Beneficiary" means in relation to a deceased veteran and in the order named:

1.16 (1) the surviving spouse, if not remarried;

1.17 (2) the children of the veteran, if there is no surviving spouse or the surviving spouse
1.18 has remarried;

1.19 (3) the veteran's surviving parent or parents;

1.20 (4) the veteran's surviving sibling or siblings; or

1.21 (5) the veteran's estate.

2.1 (d) "Commissioner" means the commissioner of the Department of Veterans Affairs.

2.2 (e) "Department" means the Department of Veterans Affairs.

2.3 (f) "Eligibility period for the bonus" means the period from September 11, 2001, to
2.4 August 30, 2021.

2.5 (g) "Guardian" or "conservator" means the legally appointed representative of a minor
2.6 or incapacitated beneficiary or veteran, the chief officer of a hospital or institution in which
2.7 the incapacitated veteran is placed if the officer is authorized to accept money for the benefit
2.8 of the minor or incapacitated veteran, the person determined by the commissioner to be the
2.9 person who is legally charged with the responsibility for the care of the minor or incapacitated
2.10 beneficiary or veteran, or the person determined by the commissioner to be the person who
2.11 has assumed the responsibility for the care of the minor or incapacitated beneficiary or
2.12 veteran.

2.13 (h) "Honorable service" means honorable federal service in the United States armed
2.14 forces, as evidenced by:

2.15 (1) an honorable discharge;

2.16 (2) a general discharge under honorable conditions;

2.17 (3) in the case of an officer, a certificate of honorable service; or

2.18 (4) in the case of an applicant who is currently serving in active duty in the United States
2.19 armed forces, a certificate from an appropriate service authority that the applicant's service
2.20 to date has been honorable.

2.21 (i) "Incapacitated person" means an individual who, for reasons other than being a minor,
2.22 lacks sufficient understanding or the capacity to make personal decisions and who is unable
2.23 to meet the individual's own personal needs for medical care, nutrition, clothing, shelter, or
2.24 safety even when assisted by appropriate technology or supported decision making.

2.25 (j) "Resident veteran" means a veteran who served in active duty in the United States
2.26 armed forces at any time during the eligibility period for the bonus, and who also:

2.27 (1) has been separated or discharged from the United States armed forces, and whose
2.28 ~~home of record at the time of entry into active duty in the United States armed forces, as~~
2.29 ~~indicated on the person's form DD-214 or other documents the commissioner may authorize,~~
2.30 ~~is the state of Minnesota and~~ who resides in Minnesota at the time of application with the
2.31 intention of residing in the state and not for any temporary purpose. An applicant may verify
2.32 a residence address by presenting a valid state driver's license; a state identification card; a

3.1 voter registration card; a rent receipt; a statement by the landlord, apartment manager, or
3.2 homeowner verifying that the individual is residing at the address; or other form of
3.3 verification approved by the commissioner; or

3.4 (2) is currently serving in the United States armed forces, and has a certificate from an
3.5 appropriate service authority stating that the person: (i) served in active duty in the United
3.6 States armed forces at any time during the eligibility period for the bonus; and (ii) has
3.7 Minnesota listed as the veteran's home of record in the veteran's official military personnel
3.8 file.

3.9 (k) "Service connected" means caused by an injury or disease incurred or aggravated
3.10 while on active duty, as determined by the United States Department of Veterans Affairs.

3.11 (l) "Veteran" has the meaning given in section 197.447 and does not include a member
3.12 of the National Guard or the reserve components of the United States armed forces ordered
3.13 to active duty for the sole purpose of training. Veteran also includes a person who is providing
3.14 honorable service on active duty in the United States armed forces and has not been separated
3.15 or discharged.

3.16 **EFFECTIVE DATE.** This section is effective the day following final enactment.

3.17 Sec. 2. Minnesota Statutes 2022, section 197.79, subdivision 2, is amended to read:

3.18 Subd. 2. **Bonus amount.** (a) For a resident veteran who provided honorable service in
3.19 the United States armed forces at any time during the eligibility period for the bonus, the
3.20 bonus amount is:

3.21 (1) \$600, if the veteran did not receive the Armed Forces Expeditionary Medal, Global
3.22 War on Terrorism Expeditionary Medal, Iraq Campaign Medal, Inherent Resolve Campaign
3.23 Medal, Kosovo Campaign Medal, or Afghanistan Campaign Medal during the eligibility
3.24 period for the bonus;

3.25 (2) \$1200, if the veteran received the Armed Forces Expeditionary Medal, Global War
3.26 on Terrorism Expeditionary Medal, Iraq Campaign Medal, Inherent Resolve Campaign
3.27 Medal, Kosovo Campaign Medal, or Afghanistan Campaign Medal during the eligibility
3.28 period for the bonus; or

3.29 (3) \$2,000, if the veteran was eligible for the Armed Forces Expeditionary Medal, Global
3.30 War on Terrorism Expeditionary Medal, Iraq Campaign Medal, Inherent Resolve Campaign
3.31 Medal, Kosovo Campaign Medal, or Afghanistan Campaign Medal during the eligibility
3.32 period for the bonus, and died during that time period as a direct result of a service connected
3.33 injury, disease, or condition.

4.1 (b) In the case of a deceased veteran, the commissioner shall pay the bonus to the veteran's
4.2 beneficiary.

4.3 **EFFECTIVE DATE.** This section is effective the day following final enactment.