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State of Minnesota

HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

NINETY-SECOND SESSION

H. F. No. 4333

03/17/2022 Authored by Xiong, T., and Ecklund
The bill was read for the first time and referred to the Committee on Labor, Industry, Veterans and Military Affairs Finance and Policy

1.1 A bill for an act
1.2 relating to veterans; modifying veterans service office grant programs provisions;
1.3 appropriating money; amending Minnesota Statutes 2020, section 197.608,
1.4 subdivisions 4, 6; Laws 2021, First Special Session chapter 12, article 1, section
1.5 37, subdivision 2.

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

1.7 Section 1. Minnesota Statutes 2020, section 197.608, subdivision 4, is amended to read:

1.8 Subd. 4. Grant process. (a) The commissioner shall determine the process for awarding
1.9 grants. A grant may be used only for the purpose of enhancing the operations of the County
1.10 Veterans Service Office.

1.11 (b) The commissioner shall provide a list of qualifying uses for grant expenditures as
1.12 developed in subdivision 5 and shall approve a grant under subdivision 6 only for a qualifying
1.13 use and if there are sufficient funds remaining in the grant program to cover the full amount
1.14 of the grant.

1.15 (c) The commissioner is authorized to use any unexpended funding for this program to
1.16 provide training and education for county veterans service officers. for the following
1.17 purposes:

1.18 (1) to provide training and education for county veterans service officers; and

1.19 (2) to provide additional grants on a competitive basis to any county that proposes to
1.20 provide programs and services that the commissioner determines to be new and innovative
1.21 in serving veterans and their families.

2.1 Sec. 2. Minnesota Statutes 2020, section 197.608, subdivision 6, is amended to read:

2.2 Subd. 6. **Grant amount.** (a) Each county is eligible to receive an annual grant of \$7,500  
2.3 for the following purposes:

2.4 (1) to provide outreach to the county's veterans;

2.5 (2) to assist in the reintegration of combat veterans into society;

2.6 (3) to collaborate with other social service agencies, educational institutions, and other  
2.7 community organizations for the purposes of enhancing services offered to veterans;

2.8 (4) to reduce homelessness among veterans; and

2.9 (5) to enhance the operations of the county veterans service office.

2.10 (b) In addition to the grant amount in paragraph (a), each county is eligible to receive  
2.11 an additional annual grant under this paragraph. The amount of each additional annual grant  
2.12 must be determined by the commissioner and may not exceed:

2.13 (1) \$0, if the county's veteran population is less than 1,000;

2.14 (2) \$2,500, if the county's veteran population is 1,000 or more but less than 3,000;

2.15 (3) \$5,000, if the county's veteran population is 3,000 or more but less than ~~4,999~~ 5,000;

2.16 (4) \$7,500, if the county's veteran population is 5,000 or more but less than ~~9,999~~ 10,000;

2.17 (5) \$10,000, if the county's veteran population is 10,000 or more but less than ~~19,999~~

2.18 20,000;

2.19 (6) \$15,000, if the county's veteran population is 20,000 or more but less than ~~29,999~~

2.20 30,000; or

2.21 (7) \$20,000, if the county's veteran population is 30,000 or more.

2.22 (c) The Minnesota Association of County Veterans Service Officers is eligible to receive  
2.23 an annual grant of ~~\$50,000~~ \$100,000. The grant shall be used for administrative costs of  
2.24 the association, certification of mandated county veterans service officer training and  
2.25 accreditation, and costs associated with reintegration services.

2.26 The veteran population of each county shall be determined by the figure supplied by the  
2.27 United States Department of Veterans Affairs, as adopted by the commissioner.

3.1 Sec. 3. Laws 2021, First Special Session chapter 12, article 1, section 37, subdivision 2,  
3.2 is amended to read:

3.3		<u>27,073,000</u>	<u>22,153,000</u>
3.4	<b>Subd. 2. Veterans Programs and Services</b>	<u>27,523,000</u>	<u>22,603,000</u>

3.5 (a) **CORE Program.** \$750,000 each year is  
3.6 for the Counseling and Case Management  
3.7 Outreach Referral and Education (CORE)  
3.8 program.

3.9 (b) **Veterans Service Organizations.**  
3.10 \$353,000 each year is for grants to the  
3.11 following congressionally chartered veterans  
3.12 service organizations as designated by the  
3.13 commissioner: Disabled American Veterans,  
3.14 Military Order of the Purple Heart, the  
3.15 American Legion, Veterans of Foreign Wars,  
3.16 Vietnam Veterans of America, AMVETS, and  
3.17 Paralyzed Veterans of America. This funding  
3.18 must be allocated in direct proportion to the  
3.19 funding currently being provided by the  
3.20 commissioner to these organizations.

3.21 (c) **Minnesota Assistance Council for**  
3.22 **Veterans.** \$750,000 each year is for a grant  
3.23 to the Minnesota Assistance Council for  
3.24 Veterans to provide assistance throughout  
3.25 Minnesota to veterans and their families who  
3.26 are homeless or in danger of homelessness,  
3.27 including assistance with the following:

- 3.28 (1) utilities;
- 3.29 (2) employment; and
- 3.30 (3) legal issues.

3.31 The assistance authorized under this paragraph  
3.32 must be made only to veterans who have  
3.33 resided in Minnesota for 30 days prior to  
3.34 application for assistance and according to

4.1 other guidelines established by the  
4.2 commissioner. In order to avoid duplication  
4.3 of services, the commissioner must ensure that  
4.4 this assistance is coordinated with all other  
4.5 available programs for veterans.

4.6 **(d) State's Veterans Cemeteries.** \$6,172,000  
4.7 the first year and \$1,672,000 the second year  
4.8 are for the state's veterans cemeteries. Of these  
4.9 amounts, \$4,500,000 the first year is to  
4.10 construct and equip the new veterans cemetery  
4.11 in Redwood Falls.

4.12 **(e) Honor Guards.** \$200,000 each year is for  
4.13 compensation for honor guards at the funerals  
4.14 of veterans under Minnesota Statutes, section  
4.15 197.231.

4.16 **(f) Minnesota GI Bill.** \$200,000 each year is  
4.17 for the costs of administering the Minnesota  
4.18 GI Bill postsecondary educational benefits,  
4.19 on-the-job training, and apprenticeship  
4.20 program under Minnesota Statutes, section  
4.21 197.791.

4.22 **(g) Gold Star Program.** \$100,000 each year  
4.23 is for administering the Gold Star Program for  
4.24 surviving family members of deceased  
4.25 veterans.

4.26 **(h) County Veterans Service Office.**  
4.27 ~~\$1,100,000~~ \$1,550,000 each year is for  
4.28 funding the County Veterans Service Office  
4.29 grant program under Minnesota Statutes,  
4.30 section 197.608.

4.31 **(i) Veteran Homelessness Initiative.**  
4.32 \$3,165,000 each year is for an initiative to  
4.33 prevent and end veteran homelessness. The  
4.34 commissioner of veterans affairs may provide

5.1 housing vouchers and other services to  
5.2 alleviate homelessness among veterans and  
5.3 former service members in Minnesota. The  
5.4 commissioner may contract for program  
5.5 administration and may establish a vacancy  
5.6 reserve fund. The base for this appropriation  
5.7 in fiscal year 2024 and each year thereafter is  
5.8 \$1,311,000.

5.9 **(j) Camp Bliss.** \$75,000 each year is for a  
5.10 grant to Independent Lifestyles, Inc. for  
5.11 expenses related to retreats for veterans at  
5.12 Camp Bliss in Walker, Minnesota, including  
5.13 therapy, transportation, and activities  
5.14 customized for veterans.

5.15 **(k) Veterans On The Lake.** \$50,000 in the  
5.16 first year is for a grant to Veterans on the Lake  
5.17 for expenses related to retreats for veterans,  
5.18 including therapy, transportation, and activities  
5.19 customized for veterans.

5.20 **(l) Veterans Resilience Project.** \$400,000  
5.21 each year is for a grant to the veterans  
5.22 resilience project. Grant funds must be used  
5.23 to make eye movement desensitization and  
5.24 reprocessing therapy available to veterans and  
5.25 current military service members who are  
5.26 suffering from posttraumatic stress disorder  
5.27 and trauma. The base for this appropriation in  
5.28 fiscal year 2024 and each year thereafter is  
5.29 \$200,000.

5.30 The veterans resilience project must report to  
5.31 the commissioner of veterans affairs and the  
5.32 chairs and ranking minority members of the  
5.33 legislative committees with jurisdiction over  
5.34 veterans affairs policy and finance by January  
5.35 15 of each year on the program. The report

6.1 must include an overview of the program's  
6.2 budget, a detailed explanation of program  
6.3 expenditures, the number of veterans and  
6.4 service members served by the program, and  
6.5 a list and explanation of the services provided  
6.6 to program participants.

6.7 **(m) 9/11 Task Force.** \$500,000 the first year  
6.8 is for the Advisory Task Force on 9/11 and  
6.9 Global War on Terrorism Remembrance. The  
6.10 task force must collect, memorialize, and  
6.11 publish stories of Minnesotans' service in the  
6.12 Global War on Terrorism and impacts on their  
6.13 dependents. The task force must host a  
6.14 remembrance program in September 2021.  
6.15 This is a onetime appropriation.