

JAN 25 2006

S.B. NO. 2648

A BILL FOR AN ACT

RELATING TO VETERANS.

BE IT ENACTED BY THE LEGISLATURE OF THE STATE OF HAWAII:

1 SECTION 1. The legislature finds that a reliable and
2 effective method of communicating important information to
3 Hawaii's military veterans, particularly those veterans
4 returning from deployment to the Persian Gulf, Afghanistan, and
5 Iraq, and their families is lacking. This prevents veterans
6 from all branches of the military from being informed of
7 significant outreach services that are available for veterans
8 and their families, upcoming veteran-related events in the
9 community, and the dates of various military ceremonies.

10 Outreach and counseling are extremely important to our men
11 and women returning from combat, many of whom will be struggling
12 with some form of readjustment issue due to the dangers they
13 faced carrying out their military duties and the prolonged
14 separation from family and friends. Many will experience an
15 unexpected sense of detachment, irritability, and other stress
16 symptoms. At least fifteen per cent of our current military
17 will suffer from some form of combat stress, most only
18 temporarily, but many will need long term care and counseling.



1 It is critical that our returning veterans are aware of services
2 and support offered to them, as well as relevant ceremonies and
3 events, upon their return from duty. The Department of Veterans
4 Affairs is moving its residential stress care program for long-
5 term patients from Hilo to Oahu, where the majority of returning
6 veterans live. This move will increase both inpatient and
7 outpatient services available for veterans on Oahu.

8 Presently, the office of veterans' services, located within
9 the department of defense, lacks sufficient funding to publish a
10 newsletter that would disseminate this and other related
11 important information regarding supportive services, programs,
12 and events available to military veterans and their families.
13 The State of Hawaii owes our returning armed forces, national
14 guard, and reserve veterans meaningful opportunities that
15 provide support for them and express the State's deep gratitude
16 and appreciation for the services that the veterans provided for
17 our country.

18 The purpose of this Act is to appropriate moneys to enable
19 the office of veterans' services to publish four newsletters for
20 Hawaii veterans to provide, among other things, information on
21 available assistance and support for returning veterans and
22 relevant ceremonies and events.



1 SECTION 2. There is appropriated out of the general
 2 revenues of the State of Hawaii the sum of \$50,000, or so much
 3 thereof as may be necessary for fiscal year 2006-2007, for the
 4 office of veterans' services to cover the cost of staff,
 5 printing, and distribution of four newsletters, published
 6 quarterly, that will inform veterans of veterans' issues,
 7 including changes in benefits and the availability of supportive
 8 services, programs, and relevant events and ceremonies.

9 SECTION 3. The sum appropriated shall be expended by the
 10 department of defense for the purposes of this Act.

11 SECTION 4. This Act shall take effect on July 1, 2006.

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SB. NO. 2640

Report Title:

Veterans; DOD Newsletters; Appropriation

Description:

Appropriates funds to department of defense for 4 veterans' newsletters to inform returning veterans of benefit changes and the availability of supportive services and programs.

