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# 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 the State lacks a  
2 reliable and effective method of communicating important  
3 information to Hawaii's military veterans, particularly veterans  
4 returning from deployment to the Persian Gulf, Afghanistan, and  
5 Iraq, and their families. This prevents veterans from all  
6 branches of the military from being informed of significant  
7 outreach services that are available for veterans and their  
8 families, upcoming veteran-related events in the community, and  
9 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 suffer other  
16 symptoms of stress. At least fifteen per cent of our currently  
17 serving military will suffer from some form of combat stress,  
18 most only temporarily, but many will need long term care and



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

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

19 The purpose of this Act is to appropriate moneys to enable  
20 the office of veterans' services to publish four newsletters for  
21 Hawaii veterans to provide, among other things, information on

1 available assistance and support for returning veterans and  
2 relevant ceremonies and events.

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

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

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



**Report Title:**

Veterans; DOD Newsletters; Appropriation

**Description:**

Appropriates funds to department of defense for a veterans' newsletters to inform returning veterans of benefit changes and the availability of supportive services and programs. (SD2)

