

JAN 19 2007

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 currently serving
17 military will suffer from some form of combat stress, most only



1 temporarily, but many will need long term care and counseling.
2 It is critical that our returning veterans are aware of services
3 and support offered to them, as well as relevant ceremonies and
4 events, upon their return from duty. The Department of Veterans
5 Affairs is moving its residential stress care program for
6 long-term patients from Hilo to Oahu, where the majority of
7 returning veterans live. This move will increase both inpatient
8 and outpatient services available for veterans on 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 of Hawaii owes our returning armed forces, national
15 guard, and reserve veterans meaningful opportunities that
16 provide support for them and express the State's deep gratitude
17 and appreciation for the services that the veterans have
18 provided for our 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 \$100,000, or so much
5 thereof as may be necessary for fiscal year 2007-2008, and the
6 same sum, or so much thereof as may be necessary for fiscal year
7 2008-2009, for the office of veterans services to cover the cost
8 of staff, printing, and distribution of a newsletter, published
9 quarterly for each year, that will inform veterans of veterans'
10 issues, including any changes in benefits, the availability of
11 supportive services and programs, and relevant events and
12 ceremonies.

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

15 SECTION 4. This Act shall take effect on July 1, 2007.

16

INTRODUCED BY: Ray L. Hoan

Carol de Bell
Terrence G. Brown
Therese Chun Oakland
Carol Fukunaga
S. S. H.



Report Title:

Veterans; DOD Newsletters; Appropriation

Description:

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

