



Senate Fiscal Agency
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Senate Bill 52 (as introduced 1-28-15)
Sponsor: Senator Jim Stamas
Committee: Veterans, Military Affairs and Homeland Security

Date Completed: 2-24-15

CONTENT

The bill would amend the Veterans Welcome Home Act to refer to the Michigan Veterans Affairs Agency, rather than the former Department of Labor and Economic Growth, in a requirement that a letter to returning veterans include a list veterans service organizations.

The Act required the former Department of Labor and Economic Growth (later renamed twice) to include a list of all State-funded veterans service organizations (VSOs) in the welcome home letter that it sent to returning veterans.

The bill would require the Michigan Veterans Affairs Agency, rather than the department, to include that list in the welcome-home letter sent to returning veterans. The bill would retain a requirement that the list be ordered by the amount of State funding, with the VSO that receives the most State funding listed first and the remaining VSOs listed in descending order.

MCL 35.1232

BACKGROUND

The former Department of Labor and Economic Growth routinely sent a welcome-home letter to returning veterans, directing them to a website with information about pursuing work or education, starting a business, and securing veterans benefits. It was suggested that the letter also should inform veterans about State-funded veterans service organizations, which led to the enactment of the Veterans Welcome Home Act in 2008.

After being renamed the Department of Energy, Labor, and Economic Growth, the Department was named the Department of Licensing and Regulatory Affairs (LARA) by Executive Reorganization Order 2011-4. The order also created the Workforce Development Agency within the Michigan Strategic Fund, and transferred the duties and functions of the former Bureau of Workforce Transformation from LARA to the Workforce Development Agency. That agency includes a Veterans Services Division, which works with employers and veterans to fill employment opportunities. The division's responsibilities include sending a letter to returning veterans. In addition, the division's website contains a link to the Michigan Veterans Affairs Agency.

Executive Reorganization Order 2013-2 created the Michigan Veterans Affairs Agency within the Department of Military and Veterans Affairs. Among other things, the Agency must serve as the coordinating office for all agencies of the executive branch of government that are responsible for programs related to services for veterans.

Legislative Analyst: Patrick Affholter

FISCAL IMPACT

The bill would have no fiscal impact on State or local government.

Fiscal Analyst: Bruce Baker