

Committee Report

CONSENT CALENDAR

April 10, 2019

HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

REPORT OF COMMITTEE

The Committee on State-Federal Relations and Veterans Affairs to which was referred SB 208,

AN ACT renaming the adjutant general's department to the department of military affairs and veterans services.

Having considered the same, report the same with the following amendment, and the recommendation that the bill OUGHT TO PASS WITH AMENDMENT.

Rep. Anne Warner

FOR THE COMMITTEE

COMMITTEE REPORT

Committee:	State-Federal Relations and Veterans Affairs
Bill Number:	SB 208
Title:	renaming the adjutant general's department to the department of military affairs and veterans services.
Date:	April 10, 2019
Consent Calendar:	CONSENT
Recommendation:	OUGHT TO PASS WITH AMENDMENT 2019-1380h

STATEMENT OF INTENT

This bill formalizes Governor Sununu's executive order reorganizing and combining the military and veterans' functions within the state government. It also creates a single point of contact for veterans seeking services, which will better serve them and their families. The amendment eliminates any potential conflicts with the department receiving donations to its divisions; and adds name changes throughout the applicable RSAs.

Vote 14-0.

Rep. Anne Warner
FOR THE COMMITTEE

Original: House Clerk
Cc: Committee Bill File

CONSENT CALENDAR

State-Federal Relations and Veterans Affairs

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FOR THE COMMITTEE

Original: House Clerk
Cc: Committee Bill File

COMMITTEE REPORT

COMMITTEE: State - federal

BILL NUMBER: SB 208

432-8949

TITLE: _____

DATE: 4-10-19 CONSENT CALENDAR: YES NO

- OUGHT TO PASS
- OUGHT TO PASS W/ AMENDMENT
- INEXPEDIENT TO LEGISLATE
- INTERIM STUDY (Available only 2nd year of biennium)

Amendment No.
2019-1380h

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COMMITTEE VOTE: 14-0 L applicable RSA's.

RESPECTFULLY SUBMITTED,

Rep. Ann L. Warner
For the Committee

- Copy to Committee Bill File
- Use Another Report for Minority Report

Amendment to SB 208

1 Amend RSA 110-B:1 as inserted by section 2 of the bill by replacing it with the following:

2

3 110-B:1 *Department of Military Affairs and Veterans Services.*

4 *I. The department shall consist of the militia which shall include the army*
5 *national guard, air national guard, the inactive national guard, the state guard and the*
6 *unorganized militia, and veterans services which shall include the division of veterans*
7 *services, the state veterans cemetery, the division of community based military programs,*
8 *the veterans council, and the military leadership team.*

9 *II. The department shall be led by an adjutant general who shall be the*
10 *commissioner of the department of military affairs and veterans services.*

11 *III. The department may receive, on behalf of the state, all donations and bequests*
12 *made to promote the welfare of military service members, veterans, and their families.*

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14 Amend the bill by replacing section 7 with the following:

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16 7 Replace Term. Replace "office of veterans services" or "state office of veterans services" with
17 "division of veterans services" in the following RSA sections: RSA 21:50, I(b)(24); 72:29, VI; 94:1-a,
18 I(b)(cc); 115-A:10; 115-A:14; 115-A:17; 115-A:21; 115-B:5; 115-D:2, I(e); 261-C:2, III; 261-C:3; 261-
19 C:4, II; 261-C:7; 358-A:2, XVII; 465:3; 465:5; 465:11; 651:4-b, III(a).

Voting Sheets

HOUSE COMMITTEE ON STATE-FEDERAL RELATIONS AND VETERANS AFFAIRS

EXECUTIVE SESSION on SB 208

BILL TITLE: renaming the adjutant general's department to the department of military affairs and veterans services.

DATE: 4-10-19

LOB ROOM: 206

MOTION: (Please check one box)

OTP ITL Retain (1st year) Adoption of Amendment # 2019-1380h (if offered) Interim Study (2nd year)

Moved by Rep. Warner Secoded by Rep. Baldasaro Vote: 140

MOTION: (Please check one box)

OTP OTP/A ITL Retain (1st year) Adoption of Amendment # (if offered) Interim Study (2nd year)

Moved by Rep. Secoded by Rep. Vote:

MOTION: (Please check one box)

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Moved by Rep. Secoded by Rep. Vote:

MOTION: (Please check one box)

OTP OTP/A ITL Retain (1st year) Adoption of Amendment # (if offered) Interim Study (2nd year)

Moved by Rep. Secoded by Rep. Vote:

CONSENT CALENDAR: YES NO

Minority Report? Yes N/A No If yes, author, Rep: Motion

Respectfully submitted: [Signature] Rep Amanda Bouldin, Clerk

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19 C:4, II; 261-C:7; 358-A:2, XVII; 465:3; 465:5; 465:11; 651:4-b, III(a).

Hearing Minutes

HOUSE COMMITTEE ON STATE-FEDERAL RELATIONS AND VETERANS AFFAIRS

PUBLIC HEARING ON SB 208

BILL TITLE: renaming the adjutant general's department to the department of military affairs and veterans services.

DATE: April 3, 2019

LOB ROOM: 206

Time Public Hearing Called to Order: 11:00 a.m.

Time Adjourned: <<End

Time>>

Committee Members: Reps. Klee, Massimilla, Amanda Bouldin, Mangipudi, Fulweiler, Adjutant, Buchanan, F. Davis, Piedra, Thompson, Warner, Baldasaro, Lundgren, Marple, Katsakiores, Rollins, Lascelles, Panasiti, Desilets and Marzullo

Bill Sponsors:

Sen. Guida
Rep. Graham

Sen. D'Allesandro

Sen. Feltes

TESTIMONY

* Use asterisk if written testimony and/or amendments are submitted.

1. Sen. Bob Guida, prime sponsor, in support

- o This bill strives to make things better.
- o It amalgamates several structures under one office
- o It increases by two the number of boots on the ground at the adjutant general's
- o Was strongly supported in the Senate
- o Rep. Adjutant asks Sen. Guida to speak to funding if this were to pass. Sen Guida says he will leave that to the department.
- o Rep. Desilets asks, regarding Section 4 -- page 2, line 14 and 15 -- is this an increase in the scope of services? Sen. Guida says that no, there is already a robust family reintegration process.
- o Rep. Marple asks about a conflict of interest. Sen. Guida says another speaker will address this.
- o Rep. Massimilla asks about a 17% statistic. Sen. Guida clarifies that 17% of the state's population is veterans.
- o Rep. Marzullo asks, regarding page 5, line 8 -- has the Senator considered having any non-veterans on the council? Sen. Guida says that he has not considered that, and feels that veterans best speak for themselves.
- o Rep. Mangipudi asks, would it dilute the effort to have so many commissions? Sen. Guida say that the purpose of this is to bring forward issues and address problems cropping up. Rep. Mangipudi notes that each commission seems to contain the same members -- is another commission stretching resources too thin? Sen. Guida responds, noting page 5, line 17, that this is an overarching umbrella.
- o Rep. Baldasaro asks, with the future in mind, why isn't someone included on the commission from the House? Sen. Guida says that this isn't needed because the department has very effective communication with the legislature.
- o Rep. Marzullo asks if the main concern here is to provide a single point of contact for veterans? Sen. Guida says that yes, this is the goal.
- o Chairwoman Klee states that she was very impressed with how these people are able to work together and share resources.

- Rep. Fulweiler asks if this increases staffing, or does it simply bring people to work more closely together? Sen. Guida says that staffing was increased by two. No administrative growth at the upper end.

2. Rep. John Graham, cosponsor, in support

- Wants to make sure that veterans are getting the best care possible across the state
- Notes that the Governor set up by executive order what this bill intends to do. Notes that this has been in operation for a year and is working well.
- Has prepared an amendment (2019-1380h) which replaces some lines to clarify what the department is and the fact that they can accept donations. It also replaces a term, an issue which probably would have been discovered during the enrolled bills procedure.
- Rep. Baldasaro asks, regarding the amendment, if the Dept. of Veteran's Services would retain the right to collect donations. Rep. Graham says that this is included simply to ensure bases are covered.
- Rep. Baldasaro asks, regarding page 1, line 15 -- why unorganized militia? Is the National Guard going to take responsibility? Rep. Graham says that he will let them answer that question. Says that the sponsors did not elect to change some existing RSAs.
- Rep. Marple asks if this only pertains to 110-B:1. Rep. Graham says that yes, the intent was to clarify a couple of things.
- Rep. Mangipudi asks if they are creating another dedicated fund. Rep. Graham says that no, because right now there are provisions for some purposes such as cemetery. Rep. Mangipudi asks how diverse veterans are being supported. Rep. Graham says that as a non-combat veteran, and this is set up to help all veterans and their families. The commissions in existence at this time are creatures of the General Court and report to the General Court, and can be done away with by the legislature at any time. Need to concentrate on bringing the bureaucracy under one head.
- Chairwoman Klee asks how would this be kept separate? Rep. Graham says that this question is best for the person representing the cemetery, as well as the State Treasurer.
- Rep. Adjutant clarifies his earlier question to Sen. Guida -- that his only concern was the budget. Rep. Graham says that this is always a concern.
- Rep. Baldasaro asks if he is correct that these are already in place in other line items. Rep. Graham says yes.
- Rep. Adjutant clarifies his previous statement and notes that 'budget' was the wrong word to use. Clarifies that his question is regarding how many people on staff. Rep. Graham responds that he can't speak to numbers but he is supportive of getting staff out into the state.
- Chairwoman Klee notes that she learned that it has been working out to have additional boots on the ground.

3. Major General David J. Mikolaities and Col. Warren Perry from the Adjutant General Department, in support

- *written testimony
- Col. Perry speaks to the question of donations -- says that they want to expand donations to include services. That's why it's added in at the department level instead of the divisions. Col. Perry says that all donations must still be approved by the council. Says that there are controls to keep donations segregated based on purpose.
- Rep. Adjutant says that he has faith in Col. Perry's ability to discharge this and appreciates their coming today. Feels better knowing that Col. Perry supports the legislation. Col. Perry responds that there will be no reduction in the size of any organization if the bill passes.
- Rep. Baldasaro asks if it is true that the main function is to be a one-stop shop for veterans and their families? And where are they working from? Major General Mikolaities responds that yes, the biggest challenge is that everyone wants a piece of the pie. Says that combining departments enables unity. Col. Perry names several towns where meetings occur.

- Rep. Baldasaro asks if they are going to be like Veterans Count, and what are they going to do with the donations. Col. Perry clarifies that donations are used for whatever purpose they're donated for. Notes that bill doesn't allow them to solicit donations.
- Chairwoman Klee asks clarifying question on behalf of Rep. Baldasaro -- if funds can be redirected for a different purpose if a veteran were to ask for personal assistance. Col. Perry notes that they would refer that veteran to specific services. Col. Perry notes that they do sometimes receive non-monetary donations and that they sometimes receive physical donations for a historical purpose.
- Rep. Desilets asks how many veterans and their families are being helped? Major General Mikolaities responds that they are having over 2,000 contacts per month. Col. Perry notes that not every veteran seeks services, and that it's a subset. Rep. Desilets asks if more veterans seeking services is necessarily better? Major General Mikolaities says yes. Col. Perry provides an example of a veteran who had been eligible for services for 30 years without knowing.
- Chairwoman Klee notes that she agrees that more staff is ideal.
- Rep. Davis inquires about the 17% statistic. Major General Mikolaities notes that they believe veterans make up about 10-12% of the state population.
- Rep. Warner inquires about a hole in services in Keene. Major General Mikolaities responds that their goal is for veterans to not have to drive more than an hour. Col. Perry notes that they have one staff member driving around that area of the state. Col. Perry addresses an earlier question about including non-veteran members, and says that non-veteran members are included indirectly. Col. Perry notes that "unorganized militia" language already exists in RSA and was simply carried over into this bill. Major General Mikolaities notes that this legislation brings everything together.
- Rep. Baldasaro asks if he heard Major General Mikolaities says soldiers service members? Is that the National Guard saying? Major General Mikolaities says no, service members.
- Chairwoman Klee states that she commends all and appreciates the education she's gotten in meetings with Col. Perry and others.

4. Col. Kevin Grady, State Veterans Advisory Committee, in support

- Says that genesis of this particular bill happened after Gov. Sununu was elected. A question was asked that couldn't be answered: if I have a veteran who comes to me with a problem, who do I send him to? This begat HB636, and there was disagreement over the formation, and Gov. Sununu passed an executive order to address the issue.
- Says that his organization is in full support of SB208. Says that his personal thought is that government rarely gets things right the first time, and that there may be some growing pains, but it's a great first start.

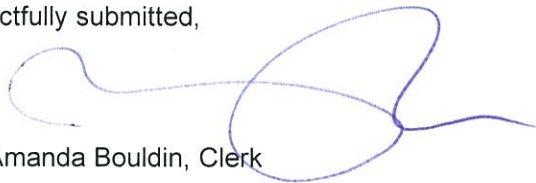
5. Commander David Kenney, Chairman of State Veterans Advisory Committee, in support

- Notes that he's never had so much fun at a public hearing before
- Says that the results of Gov. Sununu's executive order are working well
- Over the past few years, SVAC has provided a central channel of communication
- Is on the board for the cemetery, and says that many deceased have willed funds to the cemetery.
- Says that they have an interest in addressing the needs of all veterans and their families, not just the soldiers.
- Notes that Veterans Count streamlines the process of applying for benefits.
- Rep. Baldasaro asks regarding lines 33 or 35, on page 5, if the sponsors will consider his thoughts: should civilian members play a part so it's not just a National Guard game? He would like to see that readiness, those spouses involved in that. Commander Kenney responds that they've brought on many members representing different aspects affecting veterans.
- Wants every veteran to be able to get an answer to any question
- Chairwoman Klee asks if their meetings are public, and Commander Kenney says that they are.

6. Brendan Finn, council member State Veterans Council, in support

- *written testimony
- Rep. Mangipudi makes a statement in support of the bill. Council Member Finn echoes agreement.
- Rep. Baldasaro asks if Council Member Finn agrees that someone should be identified from the Reserve Center to be on that board. Council Member Finn says yes. Rep. Baldasaro asks if Council Member Finn would agree that it's a good thing to have money coming into the state for veterans. Council Member Finn says yes.
- Rep. Fulweiler asks if she correctly understands that the bill adds more people and brings everything under one umbrella. Council Member Finn says yes.
- Col. Perry notes that the language is flexible.
- Rep. Massimilla asks if Council Member Finn foresees any problems arising from combining departments. Council Member Finn says that one thing that attracts him is the oversight. Says he has seen nothing but success since the executive order. Any concerns he has had have been fully address. Rep. Massimilla asks if there is any way to reach out to veterans' beneficiaries. Council Member Finn describes a nonprofit that is dedicated to this purpose, and described the difficulty that nonprofit encounters in identifying survivors of veterans.
- Rep. Desilets clarifies that the nonprofit provides free college for children of deceased veterans. Asks if there is a strategy to include growth in the area of outreach. Council Member Finn responds that the General Court would do well to consider that. Commander Kenney notes that the reason it was so important to take this on is because the VSO spent an inordinate amount processing veterans' claims. Says that the goal here was to expand available benefits.
- Rep. Mangipudi states that there is a lot of dedication and compassion, but that there are also a lot of special community roles, and that's the community connection. What is the safety net to fill a void if just one person leaves the network. Council Member Finn says that most of these concerns were addressed by the executive order.
- Chairwoman Klee thanks all who attended the hearing and says that she appreciates what they do.

Respectfully submitted,



Rep. Amanda Bouldin, Clerk

Testimony

2

Rep. Graham, Hills. 7
March 29, 2019
2019-1380h
01/04

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UNAPPROVED

3

Testimony before Members of the State and Federal Relations and Veterans Affairs Committee

Senate Bill 208 relative to renaming the Adjutant General's Department to the Department of Military Affairs and Veterans Service – April 3, 2019

By Maj General David J. Mikolaities, Adjutant General

To the Honorable Members of the State and Federal Relations and Veterans Affairs Committee,

I am writing in support of Senate Bill 208 that when passed will rename the Adjutant General's Department to the Department of Military Affairs and Veterans Services and charge the department with coordinating the delivery of veterans services in New Hampshire. We believe that high quality services, and the welfare of service members, veterans and their families can best be enhanced if a single entity is established to address system gaps in order to coordinate and provide unified direction of policies, procedures and programs. Passing this bill will streamline the delivery of services and rally all resources in support of New Hampshire's service members, veterans and their families. Specifically this legislation:

- Establishes a well-defined, well-coordinated government leadership structure, with an identifiable brand, that provides first class service delivery to Service Members, Veterans and their Families.
- Will ensure veterans have access to benefits and services they earned by virtue of their sacrifices to the nation. It models the "Soldier for Life" and "Fort New Hampshire" concepts. Those who are currently serving will support those who have served.
- Leverage the capacity of the New Hampshire National Guard's Service Member and Family Support Program to assist veterans across the state through the use of the five family assistance specialists.

In effect this bill moves the Office of Veterans Services and the Bureau of Community Based Military Programs from the Department of Health and Human Services to a newly named Department of Military Affairs and Veterans Services that also includes the Militia, the National Guard, and the New Hampshire State Veterans Cemetery. It also makes provisions for two advisory bodies, the Veteran's Council and the Military Leadership Team.

- The Division of Veteran's Services will assist veterans who are residents of this state or their dependents to secure all benefits or preferences to which they may be entitled under any state or federal laws or regulations.
- The Division of Community Based Military Programs will coordinate and communicate with military and civilian provider groups in the delivery of services to New Hampshire veterans, service members, and their families.
- The Military Leadership Team and Veteran's Council will provide advice and guidance to the Adjutant General regarding the delivery of services to veterans and military service members and their families.

We are all "Soldiers, Sailors, Marines and Airmen for Life", and this bill reinforces the "Fort New Hampshire" concept that in the absence of an active duty military installation, the New Hampshire National Guard will help Service members, Veterans and their families. I strongly urge you to support this bill so we can improve and promote collaboration, increase the efficiency of the Office of Veterans Services, balance demand for veterans' services with the capacity to provide them, and increase advocacy for veterans in all branches of government. With accountability and responsibility fixed on the Adjutant General there will be a clear link between those serving and those who have served.

Respectfully,



David J. Mikolaities
Major General, NH National Guard
The Adjutant General

6

State Veterans Council Supports SB208

The State's support for its approximately 110,000 Veterans has always been well-intentioned and good, working within the framework of existing RSA requirements. However, the General Court has the opportunity to modernize the State's Veterans Services by leveraging existing state oversight and service member support structures.

The legislature proposed new legislation during the last session to revamp the present State Veterans Council (SVC) and Office of Veterans Services (OVS). The bill would have replaced the three volunteer SVC members with a Commissioner and Deputy Commissioner of a Department of Military and Veterans Services. The proposal would have cost the taxpayers approximately \$1.6 million, grown the State's bureaucracy, and done little to help our veterans.

What is needed is to have more Veterans Service Officers in a well-coordinated state leadership structure to provide first class delivery of services to our veterans and their families. In February 2018, Governor Sununu issued Executive Order 2018-01 to have SVC and OVS and the veterans elements of DHHS come under the umbrella of The Adjutant General's Office (TAG).

Presently, eight states have their veterans' services coordinated by TAG. This approach puts more boots on the ground, with more Veterans Service Officers to support our veterans and does so without building a new bureaucracy. The New Hampshire American Legion, the New Hampshire Disabled American Veterans (DAV), the New Hampshire Vietnam Veterans of America (VVA), and the New

Hampshire Veterans of Foreign Wars (VFW), as well as many other New Hampshire veterans' organizations, support this realignment of resources to serve our veterans.

Approving SB208 will solidify the structures now in place toward creating a central point of access for the State's services for veterans. The ability to do that largely with the existing State services, now better coordinated, is long overdue. We urge the Legislators to vote in favor of SB208 to better serve New Hampshire's veterans.



Jim Adams
Council Chair



Brendan Finn
Council Member

Roger Sevigny
Council Member

Bill as Introduced

SB 208 - AS INTRODUCED

2019 SESSION

19-0178
01/10

SENATE BILL **208**

AN ACT renaming the adjutant general's department to the department of military affairs
and veterans services.

SPONSORS: Sen. Giuda, Dist 2; Sen. D'Allesandro, Dist 20; Sen. Feltes, Dist 15; Rep. Graham,
Hills. 7

COMMITTEE: Executive Departments and Administration

ANALYSIS

This bill renames the adjutant general's department to the department of military affairs and veterans. This bill establishes divisions in the department of military affairs and veterans services, including the office of veterans and veterans council services which was formerly RSA 115.

.....

Explanation: Matter added to current law appears in *bold italics*.
Matter removed from current law appears [~~in brackets and struckthrough.~~]
Matter which is either (a) all new or (b) repealed and reenacted appears in regular type.

STATE OF NEW HAMPSHIRE

In the Year of Our Lord Two Thousand Nineteen

AN ACT renaming the adjutant general's department to the department of military affairs and veterans services.

Be it Enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives in General Court convened:

1 1 Department of Military Affairs and Veterans Services. Amend the chapter heading of RSA
2 110-B to read as follows:

3 ~~[THE MILITIA]~~ **DEPARTMENT OF MILITARY AFFAIRS AND VETERANS SERVICES**

4 2 Department of Military Affairs and Veterans Services; the Militia. Amend RSA 110-B:1 to
5 read as follows:

6 110-B:1 *Department of Military and Veterans Services.*

7 I. *The department shall consist of the Militia which shall include the army*
8 *national guard, air national guard, the inactive national guard, the state guard and the*
9 *unorganized militia and Veterans Services which shall include the division of veterans*
10 *services, the state veterans cemetery, the division of community based military programs,*
11 *the veterans council, and the military leadership team.*

12 II. *The department shall be led by an Adjutant General.*

13 **110-B:1-a** Composition of the Militia.

14 I. The militia shall be divided into 3 classes, namely the national guard, the state guard,
15 and the unorganized militia.

16 II. The national guard shall consist of an army national guard, an air national guard, and
17 an inactive national guard. As used in this chapter, the term "national guard" shall mean and refer
18 to the army national guard and the air national guard unless otherwise indicated.

19 III. The state guard shall consist of those persons serving in accordance with the provisions
20 of RSA 111.

21 IV. The unorganized militia shall consist of all able-bodied residents of the state who are 18
22 years of age or older, who are, or have declared their intention to become, citizens of the United
23 States, and who are not serving in the national guard or the state guard.

24 V. When authorized by the laws and regulations of the United States, there shall be an
25 additional section of the state guard to be known as the New Hampshire naval militia.

26 3 The Adjutant General. Amend RSA 110-B:8, II and III to read as follows:

27 II. The adjutant general shall be the chief of staff to the governor and shall be the executive
28 head of the ~~[adjutant general's]~~ department *of military affairs and veterans services*. The
29 adjutant general may perform any act authorized by this chapter or by the regulations issued
30 pursuant thereto through or with the aid of such officers of the national guard or other personnel as

1 the adjutant general may designate. The adjutant general shall exercise and perform all powers,
2 functions and duties which are or may be imposed by the laws and regulations of the United States.
3 It shall be the duty of the adjutant general to direct the planning and employment of the forces of
4 the national guard in carrying out their state military mission; to establish unified command of
5 state forces whenever they shall be jointly engaged; to submit such written reports to the governor
6 as the governor may prescribe; and to perform such other duties as the governor may direct.
7 Whenever the governor and those who would act in succession to the governor under the
8 constitution and laws of the state shall be unable to perform the duties of commander-in-chief, the
9 adjutant general shall command the militia.

10 III. The adjutant general is authorized and empowered, subject to the approval of the
11 governor and council, to contract with any person or private or public agency to provide group life
12 or disability insurance coverage for members of the national guard, while on active state duty,
13 within the limits of appropriations made for the national guard.

14 *IV. The adjutant general shall advocate for and promote the welfare of military*
15 *service members, veterans, and their families. The adjutant general shall enhance,*
16 *coordinate, and oversee the benefits and services offered by organizations within the state*
17 *of New Hampshire and direct veterans to appropriate benefits and services offered by such*
18 *organizations. The department of military affairs and veterans services shall serve as a*
19 *clearinghouse for research, data, and analysis, to initiate and support public education*
20 *and awareness campaigns. The adjutant general shall serve as a liaison between the*
21 *federal government and the governor on issues relevant to the department's mission, and*
22 *represent the department at various state and national conventions, conferences, and*
23 *public functions and provide supervision to the department public relations program.*

24 4 Deputy Adjutant General. Amend RSA 110-B:8-b, I-IV to read as follows:

25 I. Assume full responsibility for the [~~adjutant-general's~~] department *of military affairs*
26 *and veterans services* in the absence of the adjutant general.

27 II. Assist the adjutant general to implement the department's duties and responsibilities.

28 III. Serve as principal liaison to senior military officials, various state and federal officials,
29 the legislature, local governments, and community groups.

30 IV. Provide overall guidance and direction for state operations including business
31 administration, facilities management, *division of veterans services, the division of community*
32 *based military programs* and the state veterans cemetery.

33 5 New Subdivision; Department of Military Affairs and Veterans Services; Veterans Services.
34 Amend RSA 110-B by inserting after section 82 the following new subdivision:

35 Veterans Services

36 110-B:83 Composition of Veterans Services.

37 I. Veterans services shall be divided into 3 classes, namely the division of veterans services,
38 the state veterans cemetery and the division of community based military programs. Additionally

1 there will be 2 advisory bodies, namely the veterans council and the military leadership team.

2 II. The division of veterans services shall assist veterans who are residents of this state or
3 their dependents to secure all benefits or preferences to which they may be entitled under any state
4 or federal laws or regulations.

5 III. The state veterans cemetery shall provide and maintain a dignified final-resting place
6 to honor all veterans and eligible dependents which expresses the state's gratitude for their service
7 to the country.

8 IV. The division of community based military programs shall collaborate, coordinate, and
9 communicate with military and civilian provider groups in the delivery of services to New
10 Hampshire veterans, service members, and their families.

11 V. The military leadership team and veterans council shall serve as advisory bodies and
12 shall provide advice and guidance to the adjutant general regarding the delivery of services to
13 veterans and military service members and their families.

14 110-B:84 Division of Veterans Services. The division of veterans services under the supervision
15 of a director of veterans' services shall:

16 I. Assist veterans who are residents of this state or their dependents to secure all benefits
17 or preferences to which they may be entitled under any state or federal laws or regulations. The
18 division shall employ such assistance as may be necessary, within the limits of the appropriation
19 made therefor, subject to the rules of the state division of personnel.

20 II. Biennially, beginning July 1, 2019, publish and distribute a state veteran's handbook
21 which shall include the following information:

22 (a) Points of contact for all federal, state, local, and nonprofit veterans agencies,
23 departments, councils, hospitals, clinics, and other organizations offering services, benefits, and
24 programs to New Hampshire veterans, including addresses, telephone numbers, and e-mail
25 addresses.

26 (b) A description of the services, benefits, and programs offered by each entity listed
27 under subparagraph.

28 III. May accept and expend for purposes of publishing and distributing the state veterans'
29 handbook, any donations, grants, bequests, and contributions which become available for such
30 purposes.

31 110-B:85 Director of the Division of Veterans Services.

32 I. The adjutant general shall, with the approval of the governor and council, appoint a
33 director of the division of veterans services, who shall be an veteran as defined by RSA 21-50.

34 II. The director shall:

35 (a) Supervise the activities of a statewide service delivery structure which assists
36 veterans and family members in identifying eligibility for veterans' benefits, filing claims,
37 coordinating benefits with other state and federal agencies, and reviewing claims decisions for
38 appeals or waivers of unfavorable decisions.

1 (b) Identify and develop legislative proposals to improve delivery of services, review and
2 monitor legislation introduced by others, testify at hearings, and prepare legislative fiscal note work
3 sheets. The director shall coordinate, implement, and administer programs mandated by the
4 legislature.

5 (c) Prepare the agency budget and administer and monitor expenditures for the division
6 of veterans services.

7 (d) Develop and coordinate agency programs in conjunction with the United States
8 Department of Veterans Affairs as well as other federal, state, local, and private organizations.

9 (e) Represent the adjutant general at various state and national conventions,
10 conferences, and public functions and provide supervision to the division of veterans services' public
11 relations program.

12 (f) Perform such other duties as the adjutant general shall determine.

13 110-B:86 Copies of Public Records. When a copy of any public record is required by the
14 Department of Veterans Affairs to be used in determining the eligibility of any person to participate
15 in benefits made available by the Department of Veterans Affairs, the official custodian of such
16 public record shall without charge provide the applicant for such benefits or any person acting on
17 his or her behalf or the authorized representative of the Department of Veterans Affairs with a
18 certified copy of such record; provided, however, that in any case where the copy is made by a town
19 clerk whose official income is derived in part or entirely from fees a charge for services hereunder
20 shall be made and the town shall reimburse the clerk for the charges.

21 110-B-87 Donations and Bequests. The division of veterans services may receive, on behalf of
22 the state, all donations and bequests that may be made to support the delivery of state office of
23 veterans services programs.

24 110-B:88 Division of Community Based Military Programs. The division of community based
25 military programs, under the supervision of an administrator of community based military
26 programs shall facilitate military and civilian partnerships by collaborating, coordinating, and
27 communicating with military and civilian provider groups in the delivery of services to New
28 Hampshire veterans, service members, and their families. The administrator shall:

29 I. Develop and implement innovative, effective and sustainable provider engagement
30 projects to increase education, outreach, and engagement with military-access resources.

31 II. Integrate military and civilian community and coalition networks and strengthen
32 military-civilian community supports by integrating those supports into civilian structures.

33 III. Advocate for federal and state funding to target system changes to improve services.

34 IV. Ensure cost efficiency through decreased overlap, service redundancy and increased
35 service fidelity.

36 V. Co-develop and provide oversight for NewHampshire's care coordination, including
37 services and supports addressing substance misuse, homelessness, suicide prevention, mental
38 health, sexual military trauma, unemployment, domestic violence, education and legal support.

1 VI. Authorize, evaluate and monitor the administration of federal and state grants.

2 VII. Initiate and facilitate state planning processes to improve access, navigation and
3 coordination of military-civilian services and support.

4 VIII. Compile and analyze program statistics and metrics to evaluate the effectiveness of
5 the system of care, initiatives and special projects, including the efforts of legislative, statewide and
6 community coalitions across the state.

7 110-B:89 Council Established.

8 I. There shall be a state veterans council of 4 members to be appointed by the governor and
9 council, 3 of whom shall be veterans as defined by RSA 21:50. The 4th member shall be a family
10 member of a veteran or family member of a currently serving member of the Armed Forces. All
11 council members shall be citizens of New Hampshire. Of the first appointments of veterans under
12 this section one shall be appointed for a term of 3 years, one for a term of 2 years, one for a term of
13 one year and thereafter each shall be appointed for a term of 3 years. The family member shall be
14 appointed for a term of 3 years. Each member of the council shall hold office until a successor is
15 appointed and qualified. Any vacancy in the council shall be filled by the governor and council for
16 the unexpired term.

17 II. The members of the council shall meet not less than semi-annually to review activities of
18 the division of veterans services and provide guidance to and make recommendations for
19 improvement on the adequacy and delivery of veterans programs to the adjutant general. The
20 adjutant general may designate one of the members to serve as liaison to the state veterans
21 advisory committee.

22 110-B:90 Military Leadership Team. There is hereby established a military leadership team
23 which shall serve in an advisory capacity and shall provide advice and guidance to the adjutant
24 general regarding the delivery of services to veterans and military service members in New
25 Hampshire. The military leadership team shall choose a chairman, vice-chairman, and a secretary
26 from their membership. The team may, by a majority vote of its members, adopt bylaws governing
27 the management and operation of the team. The military leadership team shall consist of the
28 following members:

29 I. The adjutant general or his designated representative.

30 II. The director of the division of veterans services.

31 III. The members of the Veterans Council.

32 IV. The administrator of the division of community based military programs.

33 V. Representatives of organizations which provide services to veterans and military service
34 members in New Hampshire, appointed by the adjutant general.

35 VI. Members of the private sector who have an interest in serving service members,
36 veterans and their families.

37 VII. A family member of veteran or currently serving member of the Armed Forces.

38 6 Aid for Veterans' Programs. Amend RSA 115-A:2, VII to read as follows:

1 VII. "Office of veterans services" means the [~~state office~~] *division* of veterans services
2 established pursuant to RSA [~~115~~] *110-B*.

3 7 Replace Term. Replace "office of veterans affairs" or "state office of veterans affairs" with
4 "division of veterans affairs" in the following RSA sections: RSA 21:50, I(b)(24); 72:29, VI; 94:1-a,
5 I(cc); 115-A:10; 115-A:14; 115-A:17; 115-A:21; 115-A:5; 115-B:5; 115-D:2, I(e); 261-C:2, III; 261-C:3;
6 261-C:4, II; 261-C:7; 358-A:2, XVII; 465:3; 465:5; 465:11; 651:4-b, III(a).

7 8 Repeal. RSA 115, relative to the state office of veterans services, is repealed.

8 9 Effective Date. This act shall take effect 60 days after its passage.