

House Finance Division I Budget Hearing

Wednesday, March 17, 2021

THE DEPARTMENT OF MILITARY AFFAIRS AND VETERANS SERVICES

Committee members; good morning and thank you for the opportunity to speak with you today on our State Operating Budget submission for Fiscal Years 2022-2023.

As we discuss the State Operating Budget for the Department of Military Affairs and Veterans Services (DMAVS), it is important to note that we also have a Federal Budget for the New Hampshire National Guard that you do not see. The Federal Military Budget provides for Soldier and Airman pay, training, equipment, and uniforms. These two separate budgets must complement and support each other or we'll be unable to perform our mission.

Our current Operating Budget submission is prudent, reasonable and meets the Governor's budget targets. We kept in mind our two overarching objectives: 1) supporting the \$200 million dollar federal military budget at the State level by providing facilities and support to the men and women in the New Hampshire National Guard and 2) supporting our State's veteran community by providing the necessary resources for the State Veterans Cemetery, Division of Veterans Services and the Division of Community Based Military Programs.

MILITARY AFFAIRS - MODERNIZATION OF FACILITIES: Over the past decade, we have seen a renaissance in our infrastructure recapitalization through the replacement of Cold War era Army National Guard (ARNG) facilities and new Air National Guard (ANG) hangars and supporting infrastructure for the new KC-46 refueler. Since 2009 to present, we have been able to maximize a combination of capital budget funding (both General and Federal funds) along with military construction (MILCON) funds to put millions of dollars into our various ARNG facilities. We've been able to bring in over \$130 million in federal funding to support the New Hampshire National Guard. This includes the Edward Cross Training Complex in Pembroke, both the Hooksett and Rochester field maintenance shops, and new armories in both Pembroke and Concord. Up next will be a new field maintenance shop in Littleton and a new armory in Plymouth. With the arrival of the KC-46 refueler at Pease, new simulator buildings have been constructed, hangars retrofitted and the flight line modernized to accommodate the twelve new planes.

The challenge within this federal/state fiscal landscape is to ensure sufficient funding of our State operating budget to maintain these new facilities in addition to maintaining and repairing our Cold War era geographically dispersed facilities statewide. This includes sufficient staff to maintain these facilities and our justification for

requesting four new positions in our 2022-2023 budget. This also means sufficient funding to keep up with the cost of snowplowing, grounds maintenance, HVAC, electrical, plumbing, overhead door maintenance, fire alarms, burglar alarms, trash removal and utilities.

VETERANS SERVICES – VETERAN BILL OF RIGHTS: In this budget submission, we offer no changes to our existing portfolio of veteran programs and services that include the State Veterans Cemetery, Division of Veteran Services and Division of Community Based Military Programs. However, the last legislative session saw House Bill 1582, a Veterans “Omnibus” Bill, become law. This Omnibus Bill included Senate Bill 726 that pertained to a Veterans Bill of Rights. Because of this, we are requesting three new positions to support the programs relative to aid Veterans’ access to employment, housing, health care and college degrees as created by this legislation.

SUMMARY: Our Service men & women continue to answer our Nation’s call, both at home and abroad. At home, we have supported the citizens of New Hampshire during localized weather events, numerous search and rescue missions in the White Mountains, COVID-19 pandemic and civil disturbance operations. We continue to support our State’s COVID-19 pandemic response efforts and currently have 780-soldiers and airmen activated performing duties such as vaccination support, COVID-19 testing, contact mapping, and PPE warehouse and distribution operations. Overseas, we continue to deploy to the Middle East and hotspots around the globe. This past year, deployments included the countries of Iraq, Syria, Jordan, Afghanistan and the United Arab Emirates. This coming year will include deployments to Kosovo, Qatar and several other locations around the globe.

We continue to seek ways to engage with our veteran population across the state. Outreach programs such as the “Ask the Question” campaign and establishment of a Veteran Friendly Business Recognition program are opportunities to build the veteran brand as we establish the “Service Member for Life” campaign.

In closing, I would like to thank you for your continued support of our service members and their families, and our veteran community. My staff and I are available to answer any questions or provide clarification.

Highlights to changes in our budget 2022-2023 includes:

- 1) Change four (4) currently funded positions to 100% Federal Funds by eliminating their associated General Funds (saves \$215,406):
 - Two (2) positions from 100% General-AU2220 to 100% Federal-AU2245 (ARNG maintenance related)
 - Two (2) positions from 75%Federal/25%General-AU2233 to 100% Federal-AU2252 (ANG maintenance)

- 2) Seven (7) new positions:
 - Clerk of the Work: Manage in-house design & construction projects (ARNG) **100% Federal-AU2245**
 - Accountant I: Provide analysis/maintain financial records (ARNG) **100% Federal-AU2245**
 - Technical Support Specialist III: Provide IT support (ARNG) **100% Federal-AU3133**
 - Maintenance Mechanic II: Provide maintenance support at Armories (ARNG)
75% Federal -AU3003-\$44,399
25% General-AU3003-\$14,800

 - Grants Program Coordinator: Apply and manage grants (HB1582) **100% General-AU1015**
 - Program Specialist II: Support veterans program (HB1582) **100% General-AU1015**
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- 1) Increase utilities Funds
 - new Pembroke Armory (completed in FY 20) **50% Federal-AU2240- \$60,000**
50% General-AU2240- \$60,000
 - new Joint National Guard / State Police Hangar in Concord (FY 23) **100% General-AU2220-\$60,000**

- 2) DoIT fees **100% General-AU2220-\$27,000**