

Members

Sen. Allen Paul, Chairperson
Sen. Michael Delph
Sen. Frank Mrvan
Sen. Richard Young
Rep. James Baird
Rep. Martin Carbaugh
Rep. Karlee Macer
Rep. John Bartlett
Lt. Gen. Carol Mutter
Jerry Hogan
Sergeant Klay South
Frank Islas



COMMISSION ON MILITARY AND VETERANS AFFAIRS

Legislative Services Agency
200 West Washington Street, Suite 301
Indianapolis, Indiana 46204-2789
Tel: (317) 233-0696 Fax: (317) 232-2554

LSA Staff:

Lauren Sewell, Fiscal Analyst for the Commission
Francine Rowley-Lacy, Attorney for the Commission

Authority: IC 2-5-20

MEETING MINUTES¹

Meeting Date: September 25, 2013
Meeting Time: 1:30 P.M.
Meeting Place: State House, 200 W. Washington St., Room 233
Meeting City: Indianapolis, Indiana
Meeting Number: 1

Members Present: Sen. Allen Paul, Chairperson; Sen. Frank Mrvan; Sen. Richard Young; Rep. James Baird; Rep. Martin Carbaugh; Rep. Karlee Macer; Rep. John Bartlett; Sergeant Klay South; Frank Islas.

Members Absent: Sen. Michael Delph; Lt. Gen. Carol Mutter; Jerry Hogan.

I. Call to Order and Introductions

Sen. Paul called the first meeting of the Commission on Military and Veterans Affairs to order at approximately 1:30 P.M. Sen. Paul welcomed the audience and Commission members and asked Commission members to introduce themselves.

II. Testimony on Veterans' Issues Impacting Women

Lisa Wilken presented testimony on the topic of state women veterans coordinators. Ms. Wilken stated that Indiana does not currently have a state women veterans coordinator and outlined the significance of this role (Exhibit 1). She stated that women veterans need a voice in the state to help them address issues affecting women veterans, including the impact of chronic disease, gender disparities in care, and correct and timely disability benefits.

¹ These minutes, exhibits, and other materials referenced in the minutes can be viewed electronically at <http://www.in.gov/legislative>. Hard copies can be obtained in the Legislative Information Center in Room 230 of the State House in Indianapolis, Indiana. Requests for hard copies may be mailed to the Legislative Information Center, Legislative Services Agency, West Washington Street, Indianapolis, IN 46204-2789. A fee of \$0.15 per page and mailing costs will be charged for hard copies.

Ms. Wilken described the duties of a state women veterans coordinator. She stated that this person would reach out to all women veterans in the state and provide information regarding veterans' affairs and state benefits. Ms. Wilken explained that the state women veterans coordinator would be a new full-time position within the Indiana Department of Veterans' Affairs (IDVA).

Sen. Paul asked about the cost, and Ms. Wilken estimated that the cost of a women veterans coordinator would be a salary of approximately \$35,000, plus benefits.

Ms. Wilken closed by acknowledging that the IDVA is planning to implement this type of program in the next budget year.

III. Testimony on Recommended Legislation for Veterans' Affairs

Brigadier General Jim Bauerle, as chairman of the Veterans Affairs Commission, presented the Commission with a list of nine proposals for legislation (Exhibit 2). He stated that the purpose of the Veterans Affairs Commission according to IC 10-17 is to provide guidance to the IDVA and to identify issues for legislative consideration, among other responsibilities. Mr. Bauerle described each recommendation, and Commission members asked questions regarding the following topics:

- Expansion of the Military Relief Fund use: Mr. Bauerle explained that existing law restricts the use of the Military Family Relief Fund to qualified veterans who have served since 2001 and have requested assistance within three years of the date that active duty ends or the conflict is ended. He stated that many veterans, including those who served prior to 2001, have needs that extend beyond the existing three-year limit. The Veterans Affairs Commission recommends that access to the Military Family Relief Fund be open to all qualified Indiana veterans and that the lifetime grant be limited to \$5,000 for each qualified veteran.
- Increase revenue opportunities for the Veterans' Affairs Trust Fund: Mr. Bauerle suggested that eliminating the three-year eligibility period would require more revenue to the Veterans' Affairs Trust Fund. He recommended that additional revenue be generated through voluntary donations via state income tax forms and sales of unique lottery scratch-off tickets. Rep. Carbaugh inquired about the typical amount granted to a qualified veteran. Mr. Bauerle responded that amounts vary widely; however, most are between \$500 and \$5,000.
- Active and reserve component hiring discrimination: Mr. Bauerle discussed the issue of hiring discrimination against military personnel and recommended that an exception be made to the at-will employment doctrine. He stated that the Veterans Affairs Commission requests increased financial remedy and punitive damages for hiring discrimination against those serving in the military. Sen. Young suggested that incentives, similar to those offered by the federal government, be offered in addition to punitive actions. Rep. Bartlett suggested that a state tax credit be offered as incentive for hiring military personnel.
- Military and veterans college credit transfer: Mr. Bauerle stated that several state universities do not accept college credits earned at other universities toward degree achievement. The Veterans Affairs Commission proposes to require all state institutions to adopt the Service Members Opportunities Colleges (SOC) Consortium criteria for transferring credits and military training and experience. Sen. Young pointed out that it would be important to consider that some Indiana colleges and universities do not

accept certain transfer credits, regardless of whether a student served in the military.

Mr. Bauerle then spoke as the Legislative Chair of the Military-Veterans Coalition of Indiana. He stated the mission is to promote the needs of the military community of Indiana including active, National Guard, reserve, retirees, and their families. Mr. Bauerle presented the Commission with a list of 21 goals for the 2014 legislative session and 5 goals for the 2015 session (Exhibit 3). He explained that while Indiana is a patriotic state, the Military-Veterans Coalition of Indiana believes that Indiana is not yet a veteran-friendly state.

IV. Update from the Indiana Department of Veterans Affairs

Russ Eaglin, Deputy Director of the IDVA, updated the Commission on the department's recent work (Exhibit 4). Mr. Eaglin discussed the success of the IDVA's efforts to reduce unemployment among veterans. He stated that over the last few weeks, the IDVA's new Veterans' Service Center has connected 12 veterans with jobs at large and small businesses throughout the state. Sgt. South asked whether the IDVA follows up with these veterans after a certain period of time. The IDVA representative answered that they create a time line for each employee throughout the process and contact each veteran after 30 to 90 days of employment.

Mr. Eaglin also discussed the IDVA's media outreach program, which includes a new app for smart phones. He explained that through the internet-based software the IDVA can access a dashboard and monitor activity throughout the state. Sen. Paul asked how the IDVA communicates with veterans that do not have access to computers or phones. Mr. Eaglin replied that the IDVA is also working to improve outreach efforts at the county level.

Mr. Eaglin stated that the IDVA is studying other states' best practices in veterans affairs in order to better serve veterans in Indiana. Sen. Mrvan asked which states the department is focusing on, and Mr. Eaglin stated that Texas, Missouri, and Nebraska are some of the states that have best practices. In addition, California's app has influenced the design of Indiana's electronic outreach.

V. Other Business

Rep. Baird asked that the Korean War veteran in attendance be honored for his dedication and service, and Sen. Paul agreed.

Sen. Paul announced that the next meeting would be scheduled for late October.

The meeting was adjourned at approximately 3:30 P.M.



NATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF STATE
WOMEN VETERANS COORDINATORS,
INC
(NASWVC)



Exhibit 1
Commission on Military and
Veterans Affairs
Meeting #1, 9/25/2013

July 19, 2013

To Whom It May Concern:

My name is Gina Chandler, President Elect for the National Association of State Women Veteran Coordinators. On behalf of NASWVC, I would like to share important information regarding the role of a State Women Veteran Coordinator.

NATIONAL ASSOCIATION
OF STATE WOMEN
VETERAN COORDINATORS

PAMELA J.B. LUCE
President

GINA CHANDLER
Secretary

GINA STAMPER
Treasurer

KAREN ETZLER
Co-Conference Chair

PRECILLA
LANDRY
WILKEWITZ
Senior Advisor

LYNDA
WALDROOP
President Emeritus
and Founder

State Women Veteran Coordinators reach out to all women Veterans in a given state and provide information regarding the Veterans Administration and state benefits, whether health care or VA benefits, education, employment, homelessness, etc.

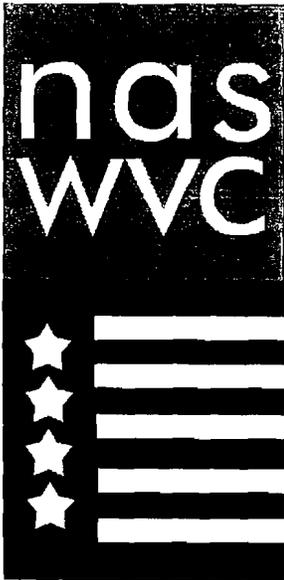
Each state defines the role of a State Women Veteran Coordinator differently. Some states create a full-time position, while others create a dual-role position among their Veteran Service Officers.

Every Federal VA regional office and VAMC has a woman veteran coordinator. However, state employed coordinators have added flexibility at the state level. For example, the woman veteran coordinator at the medical center mainly deals with health care and may not be versed in VA or state benefits, while a state coordinator would be a resource for any and all of those benefits.

NASWVC supports our State Women Coordinators by providing networking and annual training. There are more women Veterans than ever, and those numbers and the kinds of issues specific to women continue to grow. State Women Veteran Coordinators are, indeed, a voice for women Veterans at the highest level.

NASWVC works with the Center for Women Veterans in Washington, D.C., as "boots on the ground" for each state. Some states opt to host education and information summits or forums yearly to reach out to the women Veterans in their states.

At our last training conference in Ohio, June 10-14, 2013, 25 states were represented. Several of those states sent their coordinators on a scholarship program provided by NASWVC, which covered airfare and hotel expenses.



NATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF STATE
WOMEN VETERANS COORDINATORS,
INC
(NASWVC)



It is the position of the NASWVC that having a Women Coordinator in every state would strengthen the voice of women Veterans nationwide.

If I can answer any questions concerning NASWVC, please feel free to contact me at 501-370-3820 or email gina.chandler@va.gov.

Sincerely,

Gina Chandler
President Elect

NATIONAL ASSOCIATION
OF STATE WOMEN
VETERAN COORDINATORS

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President

GINA CHANDLER
Secretary

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LANDRY
WILKEWITZ
Senior Advisor

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WALDROOP
President Emeritus
and Founder

2014 Agency Legislative Proposal

Agency: IDVA

Date:

Contact:

Topic: 26

Description of the problem: Indiana does not have a State Women Veterans Coordinator (SWVC) within the IDVA. This places Hoosier women veterans disadvantaged when dealing with gender specific issues. Women are entering the military in record numbers—they currently comprise 20% of new recruits, and it's estimated that by 2018, 10% of the Veteran population will consist of women Veterans. Indiana has 37,567 woman veterans as of 9-30-2012 per the VA. Other states, with lower women veteran populations recognize the need. The National Association of State Women Veteran Coordinators has addresses the issue of why a SWVC is an important link in fully servicing our women veterans. Information from the Center for Women Veterans of the Veterans Administration (VA) further identifies challenges facing women veterans. A SWVC fits in to their plan. Each regional Veterans Affairs Medical Center has a similar position that coordinate only health care issues for women veterans in their region. Indiana is in 5 regions. A SWVC is needed to address such topics as:

- Access to and quality of care.
- The prevalence of comorbid conditions.
- The impact and burden of chronic disease among women Veterans.
- Gender disparities in care.
- How treatment for such conditions as PTSD in women Veterans may or may not differ from the treatments for male Veterans.
- Women homelessness with and without children.
- Sexual assault, harassment, and abuse.
- Nursing home care.
- Gender communications and community inclusion.
- Development of information relevant to women veteran and their issues.
- Provide input from the woman veteran's point of view.
- Champion advocacy for women veteran's needs and issues.

Description of the proposed remedy: Fill the position of State Women Veteran Coordinator. It is not a dedicated position at this time, but I feel it should be and can be addressed in a budget year, but for now, assign the duties and value the role and support the position.

Has this previously been proposed? If so, when and what happened? No. The former IDVA Director created the task of SWVC. It was an added duty assigned to a female veteran at IDVA.

Anticipated allies (legislators and interest groups): All Veterans Service Organizations, women veterans from Indiana, National Association of State Women Veteran Coordinators, National Center for Women Veterans, and State Veterans Service Organizations

Anticipated adversaries and why they oppose: Select state legislators.

Fiscal Impact (State or Local): Adding one additional FTE to IDVA estimated salary to be \$40,000 plus standard state employee benefits.

How does this fit in with the Governor's Roadmap priorities?

AN ACT relating to women veterans.

Be it enacted by the General Assembly of Indiana:

SECTION 1. A NEW SECTION IS CREATED TO READ AS FOLLOWS:

- (1) *The Indiana Women Veterans Program is hereby created in the Indiana Department of Veterans' Affairs and shall be attached to the office of the Director for administrative purposes. The Director shall designate a Women Veterans Coordinator for the State of Indiana. The Indiana Women Veterans Program shall:*

 - (a) *Perform outreach to improve women veterans' awareness of eligibility for federal and state veterans' services and benefits;*
 - (b) *Assess the needs of women veterans with respect to benefits and services;*
 - (c) *Review programs, research projects, and other initiatives designed to address or meet the needs of Indiana's women veterans;*
 - (d) *Make recommendations to the Director to improve benefits and services; and*
 - (e) *Incorporate women veterans' issues in strategic planning concerning benefits and services.*
- (2) *The mission of the Indiana Women Veterans Program shall be to ensure that Indiana women veterans have equitable access to federal and state veterans' services and benefits.*
- (3) *The program shall provide assistance to women who served in the United States Armed Forces or in forces incorporated as part of the United States Armed Forces, and who were discharged under conditions other than dishonorable.*
- (4) *The primary components of the program shall be:*

 - (a) *Advocacy and Public Awareness. The program shall advocate for women veterans and shall work to increase public awareness about the gender specific needs of women veterans. The program shall advocate legislation and policies on the local, state, and national levels to address these issues;*
 - (b) *Collaboration. The program shall collaborate with federal, state, and private*

agencies that provide services to women veterans;

(c) Research and information dissemination. The program shall monitor and research issues relating to women veterans and disseminate information and opportunities throughout its network;

(d) Education. The program, through conferences, seminars, and training workshops with federal, state, and private agencies, shall provide guidance and direction to a woman veteran applying for grants, benefits, or services;

(e) Honor and Recognition. The program shall promote events and activities that recognize and honor military women; and

(f) Facilities. The program, through grants and other sources of funding, shall provide facilities as appropriate in support of the program.

(5) A Women Veterans Coordinating Committee shall be established. The committee's membership shall be comprised of representatives of government, public, and private agencies that provide grants, benefits, or services to women veterans. The Director of the Indiana Department of Veterans' Affairs shall designate the agencies represented on the committee. However, the President of the Indiana Senate shall appoint a Senator to the committee, and the Speaker of the House of Representatives shall appoint a Representative. The committee shall:

(a) Actively pursue the mission of the Indiana Women Veterans Program;

(b) Identify policies, practices, programs, and related activities that are unresponsive or insensitive to the needs of women veterans; and

(c) Recommend changes, revisions, and new initiatives to address identified deficiencies.

(6) The program is authorized to accept and expend:

(a) Moneys that may be appropriated by the General Assembly; and

(b) Other moneys received from any other source, including donations and grants.

Good afternoon. My name is Jim Bauerle, I speak at this time as 2013-2014 Chairman of the Veterans Affairs Commission per Indiana Code 10-17. The Commission's purpose is to provide guidance to the Indiana Department of Veterans Affairs and to identify issues for legislative consideration among other responsibilities. Per Indiana Code the Commission has statutory representation from the Adjutant General of the Indiana National Guard, American Legion, VFW, DAV and Am Vets.

The documents I provided identify 9 items which were presented to my commission and passed as issues that should be considered by this body.

The items are listed with a heading, Description of the Problem, Facts Bearing on the Problem, and Description of the proposed Remedy. Additionally, attachments support items identified.

I am prepared to present each item, should you desire. Or answer question at this time or at any time in the future regarding the items identified in this request.

**Exhibit 2
Commission on Military and
Veterans Affairs
Meeting #1, 9/25/2013**

MEMORANDUM FOR THE RECORD

Date: September 25, 2013
Subject: Request for action
To: 2013-2014 Commission on Military and Veterans Affairs
From: 2013-2014 Veterans Affairs Commission
RE: Indiana Code 10-17, 2-5-20

The following requests are provided as a product of the July 31st 2013 meeting and September 19th 2013 meeting of the 2013-2014 Veterans Affairs Commission:

1. **Expansion of the Military Relief Fund use.**

Description of the problem: Existing law restricts use of the Military Family Relief Fund to qualified Veterans who serviced since 2001 and only if need is requested within three years of deployment. Many veterans serving prior and since 2001 have needs which extend beyond the existing three year limit.

Facts bearing on the problem: Reserve and National Guard units are being off-ramped thus reducing their eligibility to access to this fund as they are not veterans. DOD continues to downsize all components of the military further reducing the number of Hoosiers who are authorized access to these funds. Revenues continue to be about \$1 million per year and use of the funds for military family relief is about \$200 thousand annually. Citizens testified during the July 31 Commission meeting that they think the fund should be expanded and they contributed through their purchase of license was to help the needy veterans and NOT to invest the money. Channel 13 recently was critical of the IDVA for not seeking expansion and intentionally growing the trust fund. Expenditures from the Trust Fund or the Family Relief Fund for anything other than to directly assist military veterans and their families breaks the promise made to the taxpayers when the fund was established per several veteran service organizations and veterans. This was done in the 2013 General Assembly via HB1387 now PL169.

Description of the proposed remedy: Expanding the eligibility to access the Military Family Relief Fund to all Indiana qualified veterans. Limit the lifetime grant to \$5000; this protects the fund from those who could abuse this aid is also warranted so more qualified veterans can be assisted. Current documentation of a qualifying need to be aided by the Fund would remain the same.

2. **Increase revenue opportunities for Veteran's Affairs Trust Fund.**

Description of the problem: More funds in the Veteran's Affairs Trust Fund may be needed to support eliminating the three year eligibility period as more eligible military families to be assisted are identified. The funds would be generated by voluntary contributions and purchases by Indiana residents or others.

Facts bearing on the problem: Select legislators fear current license plate revenues will decline as our military downsizes and is not used as much as has been the situation since 2001. Fish and Wildlife currently have check block and could lose revenue to the recommended solution of adding opportunities on the state income tax forms. Recipients of funds currently generated by Lottery scratch off tickets could oppose as they could lose revenue now spent on "their" lottery tickets. Other organizations may want their cause included on the Indiana Income Tax return. Other states such as Texas and Illinois offer Lottery tickets for their veteran's funds. Other states contribute millions of dollars from the general fund to fund similar support to needy families (VA funds \$2 million per year with a vet population of about 750K).

Description of the proposed remedy: Include legislation to item 1 above that allows donations to the Veterans' Affairs Trust Fund (VATF). Consider adding:

- a. A check block and space to list an amount on State Income Tax forms to enable taxpayers to donate all or part of tax refunds.
- b. A check block to contribute \$1.00 to the VATF.
- c. A unique Lottery scratch off ticket with proceeds to benefit Indiana Veterans via the Trust Fund.

3. **Active and Reserve Component Hiring Discrimination**

Description of the problem: There is a strong case to be made that the clear public policy of protecting our military personnel from employment discrimination deserves judicial protection through the creation of a new exception to the at-will employment doctrine. If the courts in Indiana and elsewhere don't do this, then the legislatures should (and vice versa). Every legislator, judge, and citizen would have to agree that leaving the members of our armed services subject to employment discrimination when looking for a new job, without an adequate remedy, is not an acceptable state of affairs.

Facts bearing on the problem: See attached article by **Ted Daywalt** President and CEO of VetJobs. **The Real Veteran Unemployment Problem.** See attached article in the **Law Review 1299**, October 2012. **There's a Hole in USERRA. Will States Fill it if Congress Won't?** By Robert E. Goodman, Esq. Congress has not addressed to date. Indiana has over 20 thousand Reserve Component service members currently serving. Indiana has the 4th largest National Guard in the nation. DOD published policy is to

continue to use the Reserve Component as an Operational Force with a goal of “call up” once every five years—employers know this.

Description of the proposed remedy: Increased financial remedy and punitive damages for hiring discrimination against those serving in the military (Active or Reserve Component).

4. **County Veteran Service Officers (CVSO) Structure.**

Description of the problem: The current CVSO structure established in 1945 is inadequate in serving veterans.

Facts bearing on the problem: See attached Veterans Affairs 2012 statistics on veteran location by county within Indiana. County Commissions vary greatly in pay, facilities, support, location, area of responsibility, duties and responsibilities, and control place on the CVSO position(s). This vast difference drives inequity in support of veterans and for the CVSOs.

Description of the proposed remedy: Establish a study group to revise the CVSO structure to meet the needs of Hoosier Veterans for the 21st Century.

5. **Veteran Affairs Claims Process and Claims Appeals Process.**

Description of the problem: The current Veteran Service Organization’s Veteran Service Offices support Hoosiers today from start to conclusion, including appeals which occur in Washington DC. CVSOs need a process should appeals be required to adequately support Hoosiers appealing claims decisions.

Facts bearing on the problem: The William & Mary's Puller Veterans Benefits Clinic is being touted by members of Congress as a national model for inexpensively dealing with the Veterans Administration's backlog. Between 2009 and August 2012, the clinic has helped 46 clients with submission of 343 claimed injuries or illnesses. Since 2008, 30 law schools in 18 states have developed clinical programs that specifically assist veterans in some manner. Financial assistance is one of the things that could help schools currently helping veterans take on more clients or get other schools' programs off the ground, said Stacey-Rae Simcox, an Army veteran who serves as the managing attorney at William & Mary's Puller Veterans Benefits Clinic.

School officials said it's difficult to pinpoint the exact cost of the clinic because it uses existing space and faculty, but Simcox said William & Mary's program runs on a 'shoestring' budget.

The current Veterans Service Organizations that provide Veterans Claims Support to

Hoosier Veterans is shrinking. The American Legion in Indiana spends over \$300 thousand a year helping veterans with their claims. In Washington DC, their organization manages appeals on behalf of Hoosiers should an appeal be needed. As CVSOs become accredited throughout the state there is no established process to handle an appeal or assist with claims development and management of behalf of the veteran.

Description of the proposed remedy: Analyze and make recommendations how to implement the VA Claims Process and VA Claims Appeal Process as established at William and Mary College in Virginia and with input from Veteran Service Organization's Veteran Service Offices. Include development of a Memorandum of Understanding with Veteran Service Organizations to support the developed appeal process.

6. Providing a Veterans and Reserve Component hiring preference for state employment (exemption from this for positions that require registration with job service).

Description of the problem: The current Indiana Code provides a preference for Veteran Owned Business and Disabled Veteran Owned Business. The Federal Government also provides preference "points" as part of their hiring practices; Indiana has no such statutes.

Facts bearing on the problem: Veterans and Reservists have sacrificed by serving in our military and deserve special consideration when state government seeks to fill vacancies. Other states offer such special consideration. See GA Veteran's Preference web page attached.

Description of the proposed remedy: Establish Veterans and Reservists preference similar to Georgia.

7. Providing Job Training Priority for all Active Component and Reserve Component Service Members who have served for at least 30 days.

Description of the problem: IC22-4. 1-4-3 only provides priority for National Guard. This discriminates against the thousands of Hoosiers on Active Duty and Reservists who serve in the Army Reserve, Navy Reserve, Marine Reserve, Air Force Reserve, and Coast Guard Reserve.

Facts bearing on the problem: Indiana has over 20,000 Hoosiers serving on active duty annually. Additionally, there are over 7,000 (Federal) Reservists who have Indiana as their home. The Military Entrance Processing Station (MEPS) adds about 5,000 Hoosier Residents annually. In spite of these accessions the number of people serving from Indiana remains constant around the numbers given above. One can conclude that several of those leaving Active Duty or Reserve Duty remains in Indiana. Indiana unemployment of post 9-11 veterans was 20.1% as of May 2013.

Description of the proposed remedy: Modify IC22-4.1-4-3 to reflect ALL military service members should be given priority for job training.

8. **Military and Veterans College Credit Transfer.**

Description of the problem: Several state universities do not accept college credits earned at other universities toward degree achievement.

Facts bearing on the problem: Approximately 1,900 appropriately accredited colleges and universities providing associate, bachelor's and master's degrees for servicemembers and their adult dependent family members. Most of these institutions of higher learning have joined the ServiceMembers Opportunity Colleges (SOC) Consortium.

Highlights include:

- Military-friendly institutions with flexible policies that allow mobile servicemembers and their families to complete degrees rather than just accumulate course credit.
- Many SOC Consortium Guide on CD or SOC Web site with an Institutional Information Page for each Consortium member school detailing school information in a variety of areas, including the awarding of non-traditional credit and points-of-contact for a SOC Institutional Representative, SOC Counselor, and Veterans Program Administrator or School Certifying Official.

Key Features of the SOC Consortium:

- Member commitment to the following from the SOC Criteria:
 - Reasonable Transfer of Credit: avoid excessive loss of previously earned credit and avoid course work duplication
 - Reduced Academic Residency: limited to no more than 25% of degree requirements with no final year or semester in residence (may require 30% for undergraduate degrees offered 100% online)
 - Credit for Military Training and Experience: recognize and use ACE Military Guide to the Evaluation of Educational Experiences in the Armed Services in evaluating and awarding academic credit for military training and experience
 - Credit for Nationally-Recognized Testing Programs: award credit for at least one nationally-recognized testing program such as College-Level Examination Program (CLEP), DSST Examinations, Excelsior College Examinations (ECE)

For further details and a full listing of institutions that belong see:
<http://www.soc.aascu.org/socconsortium/Default.html>

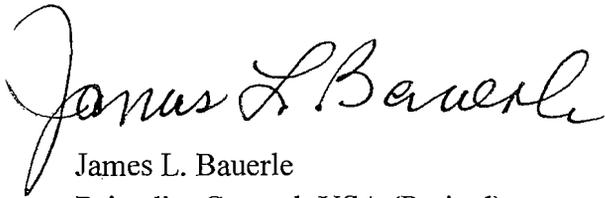
Description of the proposed remedy: Require ALL state institutions to adopt the SOC criteria.

9. **Amendment to Fix the National Guard Tuition Supplement Program.**

Description of the problem: IC21-13-4. The State of Indiana has a generous Tuition Supplement Program for our Indiana National Guard members, but that system is subject to abuse. Currently there are no requirements for course completion or minimum acceptable standards for payment of the supplement or continuation in the program.

Facts bearing on the problem: Indiana has over 14,000 Hoosiers serving in the Indiana National Guard. Many Guardsmen take advantage of this program and the program is promoted as a recruiting tool. The annual attrition rate in the Indiana National Guard is about 30%. Abuse of this program exists. The results of this abuse is not only financial, other students lose out on the opportunity to participate in courses because they are closed as full.

Description of the proposed remedy: Modify IC21-13-4 to fix the State Program to mirror Federal requirements for qualification/reimbursement of State dollars in support of the State program.



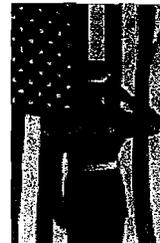
James L. Bauerle
Brigadier General, USA (Retired)
Chairman

cf: Director, IDVA

Veterans Preference

Veteran's Preference

Some veterans may be eligible to receive either 5 or 10 points added to their passing score on a pre-employment. Below are the types of veteran's preference granted by the State of Georgia. In order to receive credit for Veteran's Preference, you must submit copies of the appropriate documentation to the appropriate Hiring Agency HR Department.



Please note: Veteran's Preference cannot be awarded until copies of the appropriate documentation have been received. Also, copies of documentation may not be returned.

Additional Veteran's Information: Please visit [Veterans' Employment & Training Service and GI Bill](#) to get more info.

The following types of preference are currently granted:

Type (points given)	Required Documentation
VETERAN (5)	DD214 showing dates of service and type of discharge
VETERAN'S SURVIVING SPOUSE (10)	DD214; marriage and death certificates
DISABLED VETERAN (10)	Certificate of service-connected disability of at least 10% from the V.A. dated within the last 6 months; DD214
DISABLED VETERAN'S SPOUSE (10)	Disabled veteran's documents dated within last 6 months; DD214; veteran must have 100% disability; marriage certificate

Careers.Ga.Gov is the State of Georgia's official one-stop source for State Jobs and employment information.

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This site is best viewed using current versions of Microsoft Internet Explorer 6 and higher at a screen resolution of 800 x 600 or higher.

Employment Protections Elusive for Returning Troops

by Riley Johnson and Rachel Leingang | News21 Published Aug. 24, 2013

Despite laws protecting the civilian jobs of National Guard members and reservists, more than 15,000 troops since 2001 have had to fight for their employment rights through official complaints that require tedious and sometimes expensive disputes, a News21 investigation shows.

In the meantime, these service members remain unemployed or search for other work without any guarantee they will get back their jobs, back pay or pensions.

Lt. Col. Chuck Schlom trained for more than 20 years before deploying for the first time in his military career to a combat zone. A former active-duty Army officer serving as an aviation specialist in the Army Reserve, Schlom said he was primed – at last – to go to war.

“I was watching these kids fighting a war that I had been trained to do all my life,” he said.

Two months after Schlom, a Chicago-based sales manager for SPX Cooling Technologies, notified the company he had been called to go to Afghanistan, a human resources manager summoned him to a breakfast meeting in the Hilton at Chicago O’Hare International Airport and fired him.

A 1994 law called the Uniformed Services Employment and Reemployment Rights Act, or USERRA, is intended to protect the jobs of National Guard members and reservists. The law says those soldiers can’t be fired or lose benefits or seniority because they are called to military-related duties, including drill weekends or deployments like Schlom’s.

“Here I am ready to deploy to a combat zone, and my company cans me,” Schlom said.



Photo

Courtesy Chuck Schlom

Army Reserve Lt. Col. Chuck Schlom, pictured here on a Provincial Reconstruction Team mission, deployed to Afghanistan in 2005. Schlom was fired two months after telling his employer about his upcoming deployment, which he said violated the Uniformed Services Employment and Reemployment Rights Act. He eventually settled with the company.

“My wife and I believed in saving our money for a rainy day,” he added. “And suddenly it started raining.”

Air Force Reserve Tech. Sgt. Jerry DeLay flew supplies into and out of Iraq and Afghanistan during his deployment from 2003 to 2005. DeLay, 46, returned to his job as a technician for ACE Heating in the Seattle suburb of Federal Way, Wash., to find his hours had been cut and given to another employee, he said.

DeLay decided to confront his boss, telling him, “I do not have the job I left.”

DeLay’s boss dismissed the service technician’s appeal for more hours and later fired him. DeLay filed a complaint with the government, though he’s among the minority who do.

A 2011 Department of Defense survey showed that 76 percent of National Guard and Reserve members don’t seek help for their USERRA problems. About half of those who responded said they didn’t know whom to contact about their problems, didn’t think their problems were “worth the fight,” or that seeking help would resolve their problems, according to survey data.

The federal government provides veterans a means to resolve USERRA complaints, first through the Department of Defense’s Employer Support of the Guard and Reserve, whose volunteers call employers, explain the law and try to resolve the matter.

About 80 percent of cases are resolved within a month and usually involve employers who unknowingly broke the law and willingly correct the problem. A recent RAND Corporation study of employers found about one quarter of employers admit to having incomplete knowledge of their USERRA responsibilities under the law.

If DOD workers can't resolve the problem, service members can take their case to the Department of Labor – Veterans' Employment and Training Service, known as DOL-VETS.

"If the evidence compiled in a USERRA investigation supports the allegations made," a DOL-VETS spokesman said, "the agency will attempt to obtain satisfactory resolution through negotiation or mediation."



Photo

Courtesy Chuck Schlom

Lt. Col. Chuck Schlom, a former Army Reservist from Algonquin, Ill., poses with a Polish Air Force general, on a Provincial Reconstruction Team visit to Qal' Eh Ye Nasro, Afghanistan, in 2005.

The agency tries to settle disputes or sends unresolved cases to the Department of Justice for legal action. But the Department of Labor said the average investigation takes between 56 and 60 calendar days, and by statute, it must be completed within 90 days.

Fewer than 10 percent of the cases are referred for possible court action, Labor data shows, though service members can independently request that their case be sent to the Justice Department or can hire a private lawyer.

Schlom went first to the DOL-VETS investigators, but found the system frustrating and ineffective. After five months, a DOL-VETS investigator told Schlom his case lacked merit.

“The law as it’s written is a very powerful law,” Schlom said. “The problem is who you get to investigate it – that’s really where we have a breakdown.”

In the last seven years, Labor closed almost 30 percent of cases with a no-merit finding, which means, according to the department, the veteran is “not entitled to relief for reasons other than failure to meet eligibility requirements.”

USERRA lawyers and service members’ advocates say the agency finds too many cases without merit that are resolved by private lawyers weeks, months or years later.

“The biggest problem was that a lot of investigators didn’t do enough cases to stay proficient in it,” said Bob Kuenzli, a former USERRA investigator for DOL-VETS. Kuenzli handled about 160 cases per year, but said he was one of few employees working on just USERRA complaints.

“You do more cases, you have more information, you handle cases quicker because you know what the answer is in most cases,” Kuenzli said of his experience then.

Last year, the Labor Department had 125 investigators working in the USERRA program, including seven senior investigators who worked solely on USERRA, according to a department spokesman. USERRA investigators handled more than 1,400 new cases in 2012, according to preliminary data.

Six weeks after DeLay filed his claim, he also received a letter from DOL-VETS telling him his complaint had no merit.

Like Schlom, DeLay hired a private lawyer who subsequently uncovered fabricated and faulty documents the employer had supplied to the agency, including a Feb. 29 letter alleging misconduct. There was no Feb. 29 that year.

That the DOL-VETS investigation missed those details and overlooked other matters in the case made DeLay feel “like they just wanted to wash their hands of me.”



Photo

Courtesy Chuck Schlom

Lt. Col. Chuck Schlom greets local children in the Parwan Province of Afghanistan in August 2005, as part of a Provincial Reconstruction Team. Schlom, a former aviation specialist in the Army Reserve, had trained for 20 years before volunteering to deploy. His deployment cost him his job, he says.

Marine Col. George Aucoin, an attorney specializing in USERRA law, uses his leave time from active duty to work on USERRA cases.

“They don’t have any real dog in the fight,” Aucoin said of DOL-VETS. “There’s no profit motive. From this attorney’s perspective, they’re not effective at all.”

Sam Wright, often called the “Godfather of USERRA,” helped write the law. On Monday and Thursday nights, the retired Navy reservist can be found in his Washington office at the Reserve Officers Association’s Service Members Law Center after hours, answering questions by phone from service members around the country.

He said USERRA investigators tend to take the “path of least resistance,” too often accepting what the employers say and closing a case as being without merit even if the service member was wronged.

Chick Ciccolella, who oversaw DOL-VETS as assistant secretary of Labor from 2005 to 2009, said investigators often gave employers too much time to respond to an inquiry, adding, “An employer sometimes is pretty tough to deal with, and where they are, there’s a time to get tough.”

“If we weren’t doing that, then shame on us,” Ciccolella said.

DeLay ultimately won a \$542,000 judgment in 2007, after spending more than 14 months in the courts. His employer filed for bankruptcy and he hasn't seen much of the money. On the day he lost his job, he started his own heating business.

Linda Hayes, a spokeswoman for Hayes Heating, formerly ACE Heating, which was cited in the USERRA lawsuit, said the company did not break the law and maintains she and her husband support the military and USERRA.

But DeLay said that, "If I didn't open my own business the first day, and start hitting the pavements I would have lost my house and everything... waiting on the courts."

Schlom eventually settled with his employer, more than two years after his firing. He now works as a defense contractor – for half the salary he earned at SPX Cooling.

SPX Cooling did not respond to repeated requests for comment.

While still in the Reserve, Schlom said he was the de facto USERRA expert in his unit.

"It was happening to a lot of service guys," he said. "And I think I kind of owed it to some of the guys that it was happening to that, you know, you should fight something that you see, that you believe is wrong."

Riley Johnson was a Peter Kiewit Foundation Fellow, and Rachel Leingang was an Ethics and Excellence in Journalism Foundation Fellow for News21 this summer.

Ted Daywalt President and CEO of VetJobs

The *Real* Veteran Unemployment Problem

Posted: 04/03/2013 9:14 am

There have been many confusing articles in the press recently about whether the unemployment situation for veterans is improving or getting worse. Much of the confusion stems from the press reports written by people who do not know how to interpret the Department of Labor (DOL) and Bureau of Labor Statistics (BLS) two unemployment reports.

According to the BLS, the total number of unemployed veterans in February 2012 was 777,000. The total in February 2013 was 772,000, a decline of only 5,000 in a year. Of course, in January 2013 there were 844,000 unemployed veterans. So in the short and the long term the veteran unemployment rate is improving.

When looking at veteran unemployment, it helps to identify which veterans one is talking about. To make things easy, think in terms of three specific groups: transitioning veterans (those leaving active duty), separated veterans (been out for one or more years) and the National Guard & Reserve.

Younger veterans have had a higher unemployment rate than other veterans since 2007. Press reports attribute younger veteran unemployment to not having skills since they were in the military, problems from the wars, lack of education, PTSD, lack of a prior civilian job, etc. While some of these myths may be true for a very small minority of young veterans, they are NOT the real reasons for young veteran unemployment today.

So let us dispel the myths.

First, anyone who has been in the military for a year or more has skills sought by civilian employers.

Second, the reality is the unemployment rate for veterans as a class has ALWAYS been lower than the national unemployment rate. This is always a shock to people because of the way veterans are portrayed in the press. The fact that veterans as a class have an overall unemployment rate that is always lower than the national unemployment rate proves beyond any doubt that veterans have better success finding employment than non-veterans!

Third, at VetJobs we see over 20,000 veterans and their family members a day visiting the site looking for work. For the most part those who totally separate from the military are finding work, which is not to say there are not some who have problems in this recession, but most veterans are finding work.

Fourth, where there IS a veteran unemployment problem is in the National Guard & Reserve. Most of the members of the National Guard are young. But the National Guard & Reserve have been called up so many times that employers do not want to hire them. A company cannot operate effectively with employees being taken away for 12 to 24 months at a time, multiple times.

Fifth, the National Guard is discriminated against more than the Reserve. When a member of the National Guard returns from deployment, should there be an emergency in the state, the governor calls up the National Guard, meaning the National Guard member is away from their civilian job even more. Employers will not tolerate this, which is why the USERRA (the law that protects members of the Guard & Reserve) complaints skyrocketed from 5,333 in 2006 to 34,612 in 2010, a 700 percent increase!

Sixth, the current call-up policy went into effect on January 11, 2007. The unemployment rate for the young veterans in 2006 was 10.4 percent. By the end of 2007 it was 22.3 percent, a direct result of the call up policy. Employers were not going to keep an employee that cannot be counted on to show up for work. The policy makers at the Department of Defense (DOD) still do not understand this basic business principle.

Seventh, if it were not for the estimated 28 percent plus unemployment rate of the National Guard nationally, the overall unemployment rate for all veterans would be about 4.0 percent instead of 6.9 percent. Keep in mind that the National Guard & Reserve now make up nearly 52 percent of America's fighting force.

Eighth, this situation will not get better until the current flawed call-up policy is fixed. Every time the active military has been reduced, after WWII, Korea, Vietnam, in the Clinton Administration and now by the Obama administration, the use of the National Guard & Reserve has gone up. That is happening again. The more the National Guard & Reserve is used the fewer employers will want to give them a job.

Conclusion: Today the employment situation is better for veterans, but only if the veteran is totally separated from the military. If you are in the National Guard and to some extent in the Reserve, it is going to be very rough until the flawed call up policy is corrected.

Having said all the above, I want to emphasize that overwhelmingly employers support the military. They understand that a strong military is necessary to defend our free market economy. But employers cannot go broke supporting the military, which is exactly what DOD is doing to employers, especially small and mid-size companies.

This situation has got to change. We are making the members of the National Guard & Reserve third class citizens who are expected to fight for America, die or be wounded. Then when they return home from wars or deployments, the DOD call up policy makes it difficult for them to have a continuum of civilian employment. This is not right and must be changed!

Veterans Disability Claims Help Update 01: Dustin Allison was riding in an armored vehicle at the head of a convoy in Iraq one morning in 2007 when an improvised explosive device went off, killing the driver and leaving Allison badly wounded. Shrapnel struck the Utah National Guard platoon leader behind his left ear, fracturing his skull and taking off a small piece of his ear. The radio behind his head was destroyed. "I was definitely lucky," said Allison, a former Utah State Trooper from the Salt Lake City suburbs who had volunteered for duty in Iraq. But unlike many wounded in war, Allison bore few outward signs of having been badly hurt. He has a scar, but once he returned to Utah he also found out he was incapable of running without getting sick. He also says he experienced vertigo as a result, but that can be difficult to prove to government bureaucrats looking to safeguard against fraud. "If you lose your leg it's pretty clear what happened, whereas if you get hit in the head and you get migraines and dizzy and vertigo and all kinds of more subjective things that happen, that makes it harder" to diagnose, said Allison, who now lives in Baltimore.

Allison joined thousands of others struggling to navigate the Veterans Administration's benefits claims process. But his choice to attend business and law school at the College of William & Mary in 2008 allowed him to become one of the school's first clients for a veterans benefits legal clinic its law school was starting. The clinic uses law students and a faculty member to tackle complex cases on a pro bono basis in which veterans can have difficulty providing the evidence they need to substantiate their claims. Veterans receive disability compensation for injuries and illness incurred or aggravated during their active military service. The amount of the compensation is based on a rating assigned by the VA. The cases the clinic takes on often involve post-traumatic stress disorder either from warfare or a sexual assault that there may be no record of. In one case, a World War II veteran who injured his knee in basic training in 1943 didn't report a claim until 1971; the claim was repeatedly denied until the clinic stepped in.

The clinic is being touted by members of Congress as a national model for inexpensively dealing with the Veterans Administration's backlog. Between 2009 and August 2012, the clinic has helped 46 clients with submission of 343 claimed injuries or illnesses. "At 50 clients you're directly representing at a time, that's certainly not going to impact the backlog in a way that it needs to be. But if you get more law schools across the country to do this work then you're exponentially leveraging the passion and the experience of law students across the country to help with that backlog," said Patty Roberts, director of clinical programs at William & Mary's law school. The VA has come under heavy criticism for the number of disability claims pending longer than 125 days - about 570,000. That's nearly two-thirds of all claims pending. "We want to respect our veterans, but when you've got people waiting, often times in excess of a year to get their claims processed, that's not a good sign," said U.S. Sen. Mark Warner (D-VA) "This is a national embarrassment." Warner has

urged Senate colleagues to work with law schools in their states to create similar legal clinics. He also urged VA Secretary Eric Shinseki to help move that process along.

The Williamsburg college has been contacted by White House officials to see what could help replicate the program elsewhere. In response, the school developed a playbook for starting similar legal clinics. So far, Warner's office has forwarded that playbook to about 10 law schools, including those at the University of Pennsylvania, University of Colorado and Oregon State. On 23 MAY, the effort gained momentum when U.S. Sens. Jeanne Shaheen (D-NH), Amy Klobuchar (D-MN), and Chris Murphy (D-CT) introduced a bill that authorizes the VA to provide support to law school programs that provide legal assistance to veterans. The Veterans Legal Support Act of 2013 would allow the VA to spend up to \$1 million a year assisting those programs. Shaheen's office says that since 2008, 30 law schools in 18 states have developed clinical programs that specifically assist veterans in some manner. Financial assistance is one of the things that could help schools currently helping veterans take on more clients or get other schools' programs off the ground, said Stacey-Rae Simcox, an Army veteran who serves as the managing attorney at William & Mary's Puller Veterans Benefits Clinic.

School officials said it's difficult to pinpoint the exact cost of the clinic because it uses existing space and faculty, but Simcox said William & Mary's program runs on a `shoestring' budget. Still, she spends part of her time fundraising to help make ends meet and pay for things like psychological assessments and travel to homeless shelters where many veterans reside. "These clinics don't require that much of an investment, but they do require some," Simcox said. Simcox said she got the idea to help veterans because she and her husband, who was also an Army lawyer, had such a difficult time navigating the benefits' claim process after he left the military. "It was complicated and there was a lot of paperwork and the rules were complex. And we realized that if two JAG attorneys were having issues understanding how the system works and figuring out all the paperwork and stuff, that the average soldier or Marine is never going to be able to do it by themselves," she said.

That's something Allison said he has personal experience with. "It's truly impossible to do it well by yourself," said Allison, whose claims took about two years to resolve. "If you don't provide the evidence, they're going to deny you. If you don't know what you need to provide or what that standard of proof is on your own, you need support somehow." After his claims were resolved in a little less than two years, Allison spent his final year in law school last year helping out other veterans by working at the clinic. "I had been in a wounded warrior unit. I know what people have to go through. I was very fortunate. It was an easy choice to feel like I needed to pay it back," he said. [Source: The Associated Press | Brock Vergakis | 27 May 2013 ++]

MEMORANDUM FOR THE RECORD

Date: August 28, 2013

Subject: Guidance to the Indiana Department Of Veterans Affairs

To: Director, Indiana Department Of Veterans Affairs

From: 2013-2014 Veterans Affairs Commission

RE: Indiana Code 10-17

The following guidance is provided as a product of the July 31st 2013 meeting of the 2013-2014 Veterans Affairs Commission:

1. IDVA should seek an additional staff person as a Woman's Veterans Affairs Coordinator as part of the next budget cycle. Duties of this position should as a minimum include:
 - Performing as a "one-stop-shop" contact for women veterans.
 - Coordinate within the state of Indiana events designed to communicate women veteran's issues as defined by Center for Women Veterans.
 - Partner with Department of Veterans Affairs throughout the state on woman veteran needs and issues.
 - Communicate to ALL Indiana Women Veterans issues, events, benefits, opportunities and other information that veteran women could find useful.
 - Identify and communicate to this Commission, Department of Veterans Affairs, and to Indiana Women Veterans items where action could be needed
 - Other duties assigned by Director.
2. Annually, as a minimum, conduct an event for women veterans that address education, services available, fellowship, celebration of woman's service, recognition of service organizations within the state that support women veterans and their needs and issues. Provide funding from the dedicated women veterans funds account that supports ALL attendees as a group.
3. Seek priority receipt of reusable computer equipment owned by the State of Indiana that has been identified as excess for the sole purpose of providing, as a grant, County Veteran Service Officers throughout the state to support their use in executing PL 169. The intent of this grant is to give the equipment to counties and that the counties own the responsibility of maintaining this equipment. The equipment would be removed as a state asset. Additionally, there should be security, ethics, use of technology, use and possession of software, and other state issued equipment and materials policies added to "IDVA Related Indiana Administration Codes" document. This is needed for CVSOs to insure they ONLY use the computer and software for "OFFICIAL JOB RELATED" business. The current document does not address.

4. Develop and provide guidance about grants as identified in PL 169 to CVSOs on equipment, software, accreditation training.
5. Communicate via this document to the State Budget Agency that the Commission recommends amendment of the MOU regarding Investments in 59010 Veterans' Affairs Trust Fund. Current MOU states 80% invested and 20% available for immediate use. The Commission recommends that \$125,000 be transferred to the Family Relief Fund twice a year and that cash in the Veterans' Trust Fund be adjusted to approximately \$400,000. Any other money should be invested. If the Commission does not provide annual guidance, THEN, the 80-20 rules apply.
6. Develop and execute formal MOUs with all state universities to have them conduct research and/or analysis for the IDVA on topics provided by the IDVA as needed within the universities centers of excellence. As an example, legal matters would be referred to Indiana University for their Law School.

James L. Bauerle
Chairman,

cf: State Budget Agency

The Officer — July-August 2013

On The Job

Molly Blake

Skills Training, Entrepreneurial Assistance and Employee Resource Groups Help Reservists Overcome Challenges in the Civilian Workforce

In a small classroom at Cincinnati State Technical and Community College, 13 veterans hunched over their workstations and studied the detailed concept of electrical relay logic. Eric Long, an Army National Guardsman, was among the students.

Mr. Long wanted a career. The father of two had a well-paying, secure job, but he said he wanted to work for a company where he could advance from within. That's not an option at his current job.

Mr. Long isn't alone in his quest for developing employable skills. The private sector is stepping up with programs such as Cincinnati State's Get Skills to Work to train Reserve and Guard members and funnel them into desirable careers. The efforts are important given the unacceptably high unemployment rate among members of the Reserve Component. Stealth discrimination is a serious, ongoing problem for Reservists; ROA's Service Members Law Center monitors and aggressively responds to reports of Reservists who are denied employment because of their military status.

When Mr. Long heard about the Get Skills to Work program, he jumped at the chance to enroll in the four week-program- an online and in-class curriculum that will earn him a certificate as a high-performance manufacturing production technician. Afterward, armed with his military service plus the High-tech skills necessary for a 21st-century manufacturing job, Mr. Long hopes to be hired by one of GE's local suppliers.

The program is a boon for veterans who, like Long and fellow student James Giufire, an Army National Guard veteran, have leadership skills, a reputation for reliability, and the foundation for manufacturing jobs but need certifications and other credentials. It's well worth the time and effort to get the training. For those with the proper certifications, manufacturing jobs are plentiful and profitable. According to the National Association of Manufacturers, the average worker earns a little more than \$77,000 a year. Yet a study by The Manufacturing Institute found more than a half million manufacturing jobs are unfilled because of a lack of skilled workers. Some 2.5 million manufacturing employees will retire in the near future, so the industry as a whole is highly invested in locating new talent.

For Mr. Giufire, who says he was the kid who took apart the toaster just to put it back together again, his dream jobs include jet and aircraft component design and development, power generation products, green tech, and 3-D printing. Those are the exact kinds of positions available in the industry, said Jacey Wilkins, director of communications for The Manufacturing Institute.

"Manufacturers program and run complex, integrated systems and robotics," Ms. Wilkins said.

"These are not just hourly jobs; these are viable careers in a growing industry."

Besides the classroom and online lessons, students are afforded numerous opportunities to network with local executives. The program will eventually be rolled out in Los Angeles; Houston and Fort Worth, Texas; Schenectady, N.Y.; Greenville, S.C.; Durham, N.C.; and Evansville, Ind.

Get Skills to Work is managed by The Manufacturing Institute and supported through financial donations from companies including GE, Alcoa Inc., Boeing, and Lockheed Martin. There's also an online digital tool kit to aid employers in skill translation, recruiting, retention, and other best practices. The tool kit will be updated frequently as companies and veterans come forward with ideas and suggestions to support veterans.

Long before being vet-friendly was trendy, GE was supporting veteran employees like Kris Urbauer, who was activated just days after the 9/11 attacks. She says she got the call from the Pentagon and, within a few weeks, left her job at GE to work at Ground Zero. Ms. Urbauer, a West Point grad and currently the program manager for GE's veterans initiatives, said the job with the Army Corps of Engineers was "hugely fulfilling," and she didn't have to worry whether she would have a job when she returned a year later. GE has 10,000 veteran employees already on board and plans to hire 1,000 vets a year for the next five years.

Help Available for Entrepreneurs

Kelly Broome knows a little something about being called to duty. He has been activated eight times during his 24-year military career for either contingency operations or combat. Broome, currently serving in a special operations detachment in the Texas Army National Guard, was tired of what he called a "stutter-stepped" career. It's why, after his last deployment, he and his wife looked into starting their own business. To do that, they went looking for formalized entrepreneurial guidance.

The two recently attended Syracuse University's Operation: Endure and Grow program, operated by the university's Institute for Veterans and Military Families, the first national center in higher education focused on the social, economic, education, and policy issues impacting veterans and their families post-service. The Web-based, eight-week training course is designed specifically for Guard and Reserve members and their families.

Divided into two tracks, the classes are intimate and applicable to current and future business owners. The startup track is a crash course in entrepreneurialism that includes writing a business plan, accounting, marketing, financing, and budgeting. The growth track is aimed at those with an established business. Its curriculum includes lessons on social media, guerilla marketing, managing growth, securing government contracts, and exit strategies.

"Stealth discrimination is a serious, ongoing problem for Reservists; ROA's Service Members Law Center monitors and aggressively responds to reports of Reservists who are denied employment because of their military status."

After the classes ended, Mr. Broome chose to buy a franchise called ARCpoint Labs, a background check and alcohol screening business, in part because it had a reputation for accommodating franchisees in the military.

"I wanted to make sure that if I did get activated or deployed, the company would offer me some additional support," said Mr. Broome.

Today, the Broomes run two successful locations in Texas and are starting a nonprofit. Kelly Broome said the program, along with his military experience, self-discipline, and adaptability, enabled him to start and run a business with confidence and competence. Together with their partners at the Small Business Administration, Operation: Endure and Grow offers follow-up support for participants, including pairing students up with mentors who assist with things such as financing and logo design.

Giving Vets a Wingman

What happens once a vet is hired on at a largely civilian staffed company like Coca-Cola? Culture shock, said Chad Storlie, a retired U.S. Army Reserve Special Forces officer and author of *Combat Leader to Corporate Leader*. In response to the fish-out-of-water syndrome that many vets experience after they transition to the civilian world, many companies are establishing veteran-specific employee resource groups (ERGs), also called affinity groups or employee networks, for their former military, military spouse, Reservist and Guard employees.

"Companies want to make vets feel like they are part of the organization," said Mr. Storlie.

For example, USAA's Wingman Program pairs new hires with established employees who mentor and help integrate them into company culture. CSX, an international transportation company in which former military personnel make up 20 percent of the workforce, has a military affinity group for its veterans and spouse employees.

These programs have proven beneficial to the employee and the employer; workers feel welcome and connect with their constituents, stay at the company, and ultimately help recruit other vets, Storlie said. That niche is critical for Reserve and Guard members, who can find the rapid transition from deployment back to work jarring, he said.

"Long before being vet-friendly was trendy, GE was supporting veteran employees like Kris Urbauer, who was activated just days after the 9/11 attacks."

It's not all business, however. ERGs organize social events around Veterans Day or Memorial Day and educate civilian employees about ways to pitch in and help local military families.

Meanwhile back in Cincinnati, Mr. Giufire and Mr. Long are busy interviewing for positions with area manufacturers- thankful for the opportunity to explore a career, rather than just a job.

Molly Blake is an Arizona-based freelance writer who specializes in writing about issues related to military spouses and families; her articles have appeared in such publications as The New

York Times' At War blog, The Huffington Post, CNN.com, and Military Spouse Magazine. Her husband is an active duty U.S. Marine Corps aviator. This is her first article for The Officer.

The Officer — July-August 2013

ROA Staff

Battling for Reservists' Employment Rights

Why are so many veterans unable to find good civilian jobs after leaving active duty? One reason is stealth discrimination by employers, including federal, state, local, and private sector employers. Across the desk from a prospective employer, a Reservist represents the economic strain of a new hire with future deployment a certainty. A Citizen Warrior will be activated at least one out of every five years, even in peacetime. As a result, Reservists often are passed over, despite their unique skills and qualifications, in favor of individuals who are perhaps less qualified but certain to be available.

Such discrimination is illegal under the Uniformed Services Employment and Reemployment Rights Act (USERRA), but it can be difficult to detect and correct. In many cases, the first and final line of defense for service members is ROA's Service Members Law Center (SMLC). Leading the SMLC is Captain Samuel F. Wright, JAGC, USN (Ret.), who had a hand in drafting USERRA when he was an attorney for the U.S. Department of Labor in the late 1980s and early 1990s.

ROA and its law center, along with private sector resources, are actively working to reverse this trend. In an average month, CAPT Wright and the SMLC assist upward of 1,000 individuals. These combined efforts are essential to recruiting and retention for the Reserve Component. They also are needed to restore faith among those currently serving and preserve the trust of America's future generations of Citizen Warriors.

VA Claims Backlog Update 107: California is moving to help the federal government cut the backlog of veterans' disability claims with a new law creating a 36-member state strike force to help the Veterans Affairs Department process claims. The state budget allocated \$3 million to the California Department of Veterans Affairs, known as CalVet, to stand up 12-member teams to be detailed to the federal VA regional offices in Los Angeles, Oakland and San Diego to process claims. The Los Angeles office currently has the worst record in the U.S. for processing claims. On average, it is taking 338 days for VA to complete a claim, according to the department's 8 JUL workload report. The Los Angeles office is averaging 629 days. The Oakland office is also among the nation's slowest, averaging 592 days. The San Diego office is taking an average of 345 days. CalVet Secretary Peter Gravett said 8 JUN the extra money is the result of an agreement between Gov. Jerry Brown and State Assembly Speaker John Perez, both Democrats. Helping veterans "get the benefits they so richly deserve after their honorable service to our country is the very least we can do for them," Gravett said.

The state hopes to hire experienced veterans claims representatives for the temporary positions. Funding for the jobs expires on June 30, 2016, CalVet officials said. CalVet has an agreement with VA, similar to one between VA and the Texas Veterans Commission, to provide state employees with office space, computers, phones and other equipment to work inside the federal building but under the supervision of state staff. The effort was praised by attorney Joseph Moore of the Bethesda, Md., based law firm Bergmann & Moore. "VA truly needs the assistance, because the average time for VA to complete a claim is longer than one year, and VA makes mistakes in 30 percent of high-risk claims," Moore said. The supplemental state employees being added in California and Texas "should help thousands of our most vulnerable veterans, such as those with new claims, claims on appeal, or claims for post-traumatic stress disorder, traumatic brain injury, or individual unemployability," Moore said. [Source: AirForceTimes article 9 Jul 2013 ++]

There's a Hole in USERRA. Will States Fill it if Congress Won't?

By Robert E. Goodman, Esq.^[1]

1.2—USERRA—Discrimination Prohibited

1.4—USERRA Enforcement

1.8—Relationship between USERRA and other Laws/Policies

Despite nearly everyone's best intentions, discrimination against members and veterans of the armed services can and does happen. Recognizing this, the Congress has long prohibited such discrimination, most recently in the 1994 Uniformed Services Employment and Reemployment Rights Act ("USERRA"), which outlawed such discrimination in new hire, ongoing employment and rehire situations. For the most part, the law has worked well with respect to ongoing employment and reemployment cases, where there is obvious economic harm from loss of a job. But when it comes to enforcing the clear public policy of dissuading employers from discriminating against military personnel when making first-time hiring decisions, USERRA has a gaping hole that needs to be filled: the lack of an effective damages remedy for a refusal to hire.

Discrimination against armed services personnel in ongoing employment and reemployment situations is normally not considered to be driven by prejudice against members of the military. It is perceived as simply business. When employees are absent for weeks, months, or years, even for a commendable purpose, someone has to do their jobs. In addition, when an employee absent on military leave returns to work, it is not always easy to slide that employee back into the same role as before the leave began. Frustration with the inconvenience caused by the employee's absence, together with the difficulty of re-assimilation following leave, often leads to termination—in large part to avoid the same type of interruption occurring again in the future.

Even more problematically, however, concerns lead employers who anticipate that a job applicant may be gone for extended periods of time for military service to be reluctant to hire that person because it could have a negative impact on their business.

The difficulties caused by absentee employees is one example of why, in nearly every circumstance, public policy at both the federal and state level is to allow employers to hire and fire personnel "at will," without government interference. But there are some limited situations where public policy has come down on the side of the employee, and for good reason veterans' rights is one of them.

The case for not allowing discrimination against veterans is fairly obvious and goes beyond patriotism. It is in every citizen's best interest to encourage people to serve their country in the military, and the prospect that a person will either lose his or her job as a result of military service, or be unable to find a job at all upon completion of such service or in anticipation of such service, is a serious disincentive to enlisting in the armed services. In addition, perceived discrimination against veterans can have a tangible effect on the morale of those continuing to serve.

By enacting USERRA, the federal government reiterated that these concerns trump the normal preference for at-will employment. With only limited qualifications, USERRA requires reemployment of service members after their military service is completed at the same jobs they left behind with the same benefits and seniority they would have had if they never left. It also prohibits discrimination against them when making hiring and ongoing employment decisions and prohibits retaliation against them for invoking their rights under USERRA.

One or more states, including Texas as an example, have enacted similar statutes, which provide explicit evidence that states agree with the public policy decision made by the federal government. In Texas, Section 431.017 of Title 4, Subtitle C of the Texas Government Code states that members of the Texas National Guard and other state military forces who are called to active state duty by the Governor are entitled to the same benefits and protections as USERRA provides to members of the national military forces. In addition, Section 431.006 provides that an employer may not terminate the employment of any member of the Texas state military forces (or the military forces of any other state) because the employee is called up to authorized training or duty, and that, upon return, the employee is entitled to the same job, benefits, seniority, and other rights as he or she had upon taking leave. By its terms and its title, however, this section appears to apply only to reemployment and ongoing employment—rather than new hire—situations.

With respect to the prohibition of wrongful termination and denial of reemployment, USERRA and the related Texas statutes seem to be serving their purpose fairly well. There has been significant publicity regarding the rights of service members, including members of the National Guard, to return to their jobs and receive the benefits and seniority they would have received but for being called to active duty. In addition, a large number of reemployment and wrongful termination claims have been brought under USERRA because the employee/member of the military has a lot to gain by winning such a suit—they get their old job back, as well as lost wages, benefits and reinstated seniority. In the case of willful discrimination, they may also receive liquidated damages in the same amount.

In contrast to the plethora of wrongful termination and reemployment claims, however, there has been a dearth of “refusal to hire” discrimination claims under USERRA. Both intuition and almost two decades of USERRA experience reveal the reason for this dichotomy—there is simply not enough incentive under USERRA and the similar Texas statutes to make it worthwhile for a potential employee to sue his or her potential employer. The best that can happen is the employee will be placed in a new job with a new employer that didn’t want to hire him or her and receive lost wages and benefits (double in the case of willful discrimination) going back to the time of the hiring decision. If there is doubt about whether the individual would have been hired but for his or her military service, or the individual soon finds another job, the case for liability and damages may be difficult to prove. So even in the case of blatant discrimination, most will determine it’s just not worth the hassle of a lawsuit, and employers realize this.

The result is a conundrum. Even though a well-publicized law exists that ostensibly promotes the rights of armed services personnel, the law seems illusory for those looking for a new job. This contradicts the clear public policy of protecting military personnel from employment discrimination, and begs the question of how to cure this defect in the law.

The need is for a remedy that provides employers with a serious incentive to avoid discriminating against military personnel in new hire situations. The best way to achieve this result is to provide a remedy that includes punitive and compensatory damages, which will serve the dual purposes of causing an employer to think twice before rejecting a job candidate due to military service, and providing the appropriate incentive for a legitimate victim of discrimination to bring a claim.

The most obvious vehicle for providing such a remedy would be an amendment to USERRA to allow for punitive and compensatory damages similar to those allowed under Title VII (which provides for a sliding scale of compensatory and punitive damages depending on the size of the employer's business). But given the infamous difficulty the Congress now has in passing new laws, including the difficulty in getting Congress to amend USERRA last year to permit harassment claims (without providing a compensatory damages remedy for harassment) as well as the large influx of military personnel set to return to civilian life from active duty in Afghanistan (and continuing to return in large numbers from Iraq), Texas may not want to wait for the federal government to act.

In fact, Texas Government Code Section 431.006 already includes a compensatory and punitive damages remedy along the same lines as Title VII of the Civil Rights Act of 1964. However, it only clearly applies in ongoing employment and reemployment discrimination cases, and to state military forces, so it would have to be amended to include refusal to hire cases and all military personnel might be called to duty.

An even broader state solution is possible, however, because USERRA was not meant to be exclusive. While USERRA does say that a state may not limit the protections of the statute, it does not say that a state may not expand them, but specifically permits such expansion. In fact, a state's ability to provide remedies that go beyond USERRA was recently confirmed by the U.S. District Court for the Western District of Pennsylvania in the case of *Hamovitz v. Santa Barbara*. Therefore, Texas and other states could change their laws paralleling USERRA -- in the case of Texas, Government Code Section 431.006 -- to cover discrimination against all military services personnel, whether national or state, as well as address refusal to hire cases and allow compensatory and punitive damages.

The other possibility—which *Hamovitz v. Santa Barbara* also opened the door to—is that the Texas courts could mold a new public policy exception to the at-will employment doctrine covering discrimination against military personnel. This would solve the USERRA refusal to hire conundrum by likewise allowing compensatory and punitive damages under state tort law.

In Texas, the Texas Supreme Court has been reluctant to create new exceptions to the at-will employment doctrine. In fact, it has only done so once, when it ruled that a state tort claim could be brought by an employee fired for refusing to engage in criminal activity. However, the court signaled in that case and others that it is willing under the proper circumstances to allow non-statutory employment discrimination claims where public policy clearly requires such an outcome. There is a strong case to be made that the clear public policy of protecting our military personnel from employment discrimination deserves judicial protection through the creation of a new exception to the at-will employment doctrine. If the courts in Texas and elsewhere don't do this, then the legislatures should (and vice versa). Every legislator, judge, and citizen would have to agree that leaving the members of our armed services subject to employment discrimination when looking for a new job, without an adequate remedy, is not an acceptable state of affairs.

[1] Robert E. Goodman, Jr., is a Texas attorney with the Dallas-based firm of Kilgore & Kilgore, PLLC. A graduate of Columbia University Law School, he has practiced law for 32 years, 22 in the field of employment law. He has pursued USERRA claims throughout the last ten years, including in Garrett v. Circuit City Stores, Inc., the first case presenting the issue of arbitrability of USERRA claims. More recently, Mr. Goodman has pursued USERRA wrongful termination and denial of promotion cases, including one which has received Dallas television and press coverage. Mr. Goodman has two sons in the United States Navy. He and believes he owes it to them to assure a level employment playing field for them when they become reservists or retire.

Samuel F. Wright
Captain, JAGC, USN (Ret.)
Director, Service Members Law Center
(800) 809-9448, ext. 730
Email: swright@roa.org

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Licensing Hurdles for Service Members Unable to Keep Professional Certifications in Good Standing Due to Military Obligations

By Gavriel Swerling[1]

9.0--Miscellaneous

The Problem:

Approximately 5% of all workers in the 1950s were required to be licensed by the government. The number is now up to 30-35%.[2] Most of these licenses require annual fees, paperwork, and continuing education. Many active duty military personnel are unable to complete these renewal requirements while deployed, and forced to let their licenses expire. The requirements for obtaining a license are usually far more stringent than those for renewing one before it expires. This creates an additional hurdle for troops returning home, especially for the reservists and guardsmen immediately going back to civilian employment.

The Solution:

States have begun passing legislation granting automatic extensions for service members unable to complete licensing renewal requirements in a timely manner, because of the unique demands of active duty. As of February 2013, eighteen states had enacted laws doing so, and 16 states had pending legislation addressing the problem.[3]

Kentucky enacted such a law in 2011, granting active duty service members extensions on state regulated occupational licensing renewal requirements when “circumstances associated with military duty” prevent service members from completing said requirements. This includes dues or fees, obtaining education credits, and “any other act typically required for the renewal of the license or certificate.”

Other states have enacted similar laws, but Kentucky’s remains one of the best. The notable features of Kentucky’s law are:

1. Kentucky’s law allows extensions for active duty military personnel who are prevented from completing licensing renewal requirements due to “circumstances associated with military duty.”

Some state laws only allow extensions for service members who are called to active duty for the purpose of serving in an emergency or war. This could be problematic for military personnel who cannot complete license renewal requirements due to training, or other such obligations. A Marine Corps Officer, for example, must complete ten weeks of Officer Candidate School, six months of Basic School, and at least two months of Military Occupational Specialty School, usually one right after the other. This long period of training would not be covered under a law granting extensions to service members called to serve in an emergency or time of war, but would be covered under the broad language of the Kentucky law. By allowing extensions for all “circumstances associated with military duty,” the law covers any conceivable scenario.

1. Kentucky’s law grants extensions for continuing education requirements, fees, and “any other act typically required for the renewal of the license or certificate” (emphasis added).

Some states have provisions granting extensions for fees and continuing education requirements, but fail to add catch-alls, like the one in the Kentucky law, for irregular licensing requirements. Many licenses only require fees and continuing education for renewal, but some require additional requirements. For example, some licenses carry annual pro bono requirements, which a service member would not be able to meet while on deployment. Such a requirement falls outside the normal fees and continuing education hours necessary to keep licenses in good standing with the state. For that reason, it is necessary to have catch-all clauses, like the one in the Kentucky law.

1. The Kentucky law allows the extension to continue for “a period of at least six (6) months after discharge from active duty.”

Having such a provision is essential to any legislation granting extensions for licensing renewing requirements. Returning service members need adequate time, upon returning to civilian life, to fulfill the licensing renewal requirements they were unable to fulfill while on active duty. Without such a provision, this law would be ineffective. Service members’ licenses would lapse as soon as they returned home, placing them in the same position as if their licenses had lapsed while they were on active duty.

The complete text of the Kentucky law is below for reference:

Kentucky Law 12.355, Renewal of professional license or certification held by active duty members of Armed Forces:

- (1) Notwithstanding any other statute to the contrary, any member of the Armed Forces of the United States on active duty who, at the time of activation, was:
 - (a) A member in good standing with any administrative body of the state; and
 - (b) Duly licensed or certified to engage in his or her profession or vocation in the Commonwealth; shall be kept in good standing by the administrative body with which he or she is licensed or certified.
- (2) While a licensee or certificate holder is an active duty member of the Armed Forces of the United States, the license or certificate referenced in subsection (1) of this section shall be renewed without:
 - (a) The payment of dues or fees;
 - (b) Obtaining continuing education credits when:

1. Circumstances associated with military duty prevent obtaining training and a waiver request has been submitted to the appropriate administrative body; or
 2. The active duty military member performs the licensed or certified occupation as part of his or her military duties as annotated in Defense Department form 214 (DD 214); or
- (c) Performing any other act typically required for the renewal of the license or certificate.
- (3) The license or certificate issued under this section shall be continued as long as the licensee or certificate holder is a member of the Armed Forces of the United States on active duty and for a period of at least six (6) months after discharge from active duty.

Approved: 8/21/2013. Captain Samuel F. Wright, JAGC, USN (Ret.). Director, Service Members Law Center.

[1] Gavriel is the ROA Service Members Law Center Associate. He is in his third year at the University Of Maryland School Of Law and is a First Lieutenant in the Marine Corps Reserve. After he graduates from law school and passes the Maryland bar exam, he will go on active duty in the Marine Corps, as a judge advocate, for at least four years. Thank you to RADM James J. Carey and the Washington Scholars for sending him our way.

*The views expressed in this article do not represent the Maryland Law School or the Marine Corps.

[2] *The Fast Track to Civilian Employment: Streamlining Credentialing and Licensing For Service Members, Veterans, and their Spouses*, Executive Office of the President (2013) (Citing Kleiner, Morris M. and Alan B. Krueger, *Analyzing the Extent and Influence of Occupational Licensing on the Labor Market*, Journal of Labor Economics, Vol. 31 No. S1: 1-27 (2013)).

[3] *Id.*

FY12 GEOGRAPHIC DISTRIBUTION OF VA EXPENDITURES (GDX)

A	B	C	D	E	F	G	H	I	J
State	Veteran Population*	Compensation & Pension	Education & Vocational Rehabilitation/ Employment	Insurance & Indemnities	Medical Care	Total SM Compensation = Col. C,D,E,F	Rank based on Population of Col. B	Total Comp based on Population = G/B	Rank based on Benefit paid = Col. G/B
Puerto Rico	102,921	\$ 604,034	\$ 43,296	\$ 2,268	\$ 508,137	\$ 1,157,735	43	11.24872748	1
District of Columbia	31,839	\$ 66,819	\$ 22,122	\$ 3,618	\$ 164,821	\$ 257,381	52	8.083715755	2
West Virginia	175,497	\$ 566,535	\$ 42,877	\$ 10,573	\$ 540,324	\$ 1,160,309	35	6.611560532	3
New Mexico	172,085	\$ 596,324	\$ 63,130	\$ 12,451	\$ 433,359	\$ 1,105,264	36	6.422773555	4
Arkansas	252,279	\$ 802,324	\$ 73,423	\$ 15,168	\$ 724,198	\$ 1,615,112	29	6.40208033	5
South Dakota	75,930	\$ 187,591	\$ 28,302	\$ 6,004	\$ 255,378	\$ 477,275	46	6.2857322	6
Oklahoma	342,816	\$ 1,331,604	\$ 121,712	\$ 18,439	\$ 626,477	\$ 2,098,232	25	6.120578069	7
Guam	8,913	\$ 37,658	\$ 7,485	\$ 883	\$ 7,324	\$ 53,350	53	5.985440598	8
Nebraska	141,102	\$ 427,268	\$ 58,708	\$ 11,914	\$ 342,330	\$ 840,220	38	5.95470661	9
Maine	130,196	\$ 420,454	\$ 37,663	\$ 8,176	\$ 290,632	\$ 756,926	40	5.813740289	10
Alabama	418,035	\$ 1,362,005	\$ 174,031	\$ 27,826	\$ 807,118	\$ 2,370,980	21	5.671727664	11
Oregon	328,138	\$ 924,333	\$ 120,664	\$ 22,224	\$ 784,387	\$ 1,851,609	27	5.642779528	12
Texas	1,675,689	\$ 4,959,438	\$ 979,947	\$ 107,047	\$ 3,249,727	\$ 9,296,159	2	5.547662519	13
South Carolina	421,525	\$ 1,301,455	\$ 200,887	\$ 28,335	\$ 801,687	\$ 2,332,364	19	5.533157986	14
Florida	1,543,496	\$ 4,067,030	\$ 782,267	\$ 132,383	\$ 3,521,811	\$ 8,503,491	3	5.509240037	15
Nevada	228,393	\$ 516,007	\$ 85,701	\$ 12,825	\$ 631,285	\$ 1,245,817	31	5.454713617	16
Mississippi	227,335	\$ 581,099	\$ 78,967	\$ 11,741	\$ 560,906	\$ 1,232,712	32	5.422457187	17
Alaska	74,513	\$ 178,264	\$ 53,712	\$ 4,201	\$ 166,961	\$ 403,138	47	5.410288436	18
California	1,844,803	\$ 4,219,749	\$ 1,393,887	\$ 164,331	\$ 4,194,246	\$ 9,972,213	1	5.405570054	19
Kentucky	342,370	\$ 946,643	\$ 119,126	\$ 19,410	\$ 765,257	\$ 1,850,437	26	5.404792155	20
Rhode Island	71,457	\$ 167,869	\$ 26,971	\$ 6,527	\$ 182,716	\$ 384,083	48	5.374999193	21
North Carolina	771,654	\$ 2,285,260	\$ 344,205	\$ 48,884	\$ 1,400,930	\$ 4,079,279	9	5.286407987	22
Louisiana	319,349	\$ 873,881	\$ 109,907	\$ 19,162	\$ 669,506	\$ 1,672,457	28	5.237079044	23
Montana	102,246	\$ 258,791	\$ 34,722	\$ 7,935	\$ 228,308	\$ 529,756	44	5.181164552	24
Tennessee	525,594	\$ 1,399,741	\$ 197,153	\$ 31,117	\$ 1,085,053	\$ 2,713,065	14	5.161903528	25
Minnesota	369,295	\$ 863,698	\$ 133,639	\$ 31,132	\$ 865,099	\$ 1,893,568	24	5.127527077	26
Hawaii	116,844	\$ 268,665	\$ 132,202	\$ 13,187	\$ 177,283	\$ 591,337	41	5.060919116	27
New York	918,093	\$ 1,733,092	\$ 414,224	\$ 92,740	\$ 2,367,824	\$ 4,607,881	5	5.018970602	28
Colorado	395,613	\$ 1,011,092	\$ 284,980	\$ 29,157	\$ 650,528	\$ 1,975,757	22	4.994170446	29
Massachusetts	388,539	\$ 810,371	\$ 153,620	\$ 39,935	\$ 913,653	\$ 1,917,580	23	4.935366597	30
Wyoming	56,434	\$ 110,732	\$ 13,229	\$ 3,911	\$ 148,555	\$ 276,427	49	4.898272057	31
Georgia	776,205	\$ 2,090,187	\$ 388,892	\$ 48,953	\$ 1,260,142	\$ 3,788,175	8	4.880381809	32
Arizona	531,910	\$ 1,179,562	\$ 306,312	\$ 36,129	\$ 1,059,215	\$ 2,581,218	13	4.852735306	33
North Dakota	56,408	\$ 127,968	\$ 19,458	\$ 3,589	\$ 114,838	\$ 265,853	50	4.713039063	34
Wisconsin	418,461	\$ 861,184	\$ 120,359	\$ 33,564	\$ 942,007	\$ 1,957,115	20	4.676936145	35
Missouri	505,729	\$ 1,153,182	\$ 161,337	\$ 31,630	\$ 1,012,336	\$ 2,358,486	15	4.663534082	36
Utah	151,786	\$ 295,027	\$ 79,200	\$ 10,753	\$ 321,117	\$ 706,097	37	4.651928213	37
Vermont	49,905	\$ 105,307	\$ 16,312	\$ 3,488	\$ 105,226	\$ 230,333	51	4.615452982	38
New Hampshire	113,101	\$ 221,888	\$ 51,111	\$ 8,564	\$ 228,792	\$ 510,356	42	4.512390093	39
Virginia	837,051	\$ 1,904,164	\$ 744,302	\$ 56,249	\$ 1,067,307	\$ 3,772,022	7	4.506323586	40
Idaho	138,320	\$ 287,723	\$ 48,246	\$ 7,882	\$ 279,402	\$ 623,252	39	4.505872182	41
Kansas	226,916	\$ 458,118	\$ 87,107	\$ 16,196	\$ 452,914	\$ 1,014,334	33	4.470080841	42
Washington	607,501	\$ 1,448,669	\$ 310,749	\$ 42,834	\$ 897,973	\$ 2,700,224	12	4.444806556	43
Maryland	450,401	\$ 825,856	\$ 273,254	\$ 36,019	\$ 813,581	\$ 1,948,710	17	4.326613382	44
Ohio	899,615	\$ 1,583,125	\$ 268,769	\$ 58,438	\$ 1,818,697	\$ 3,729,028	6	4.145138694	45
Iowa	238,236	\$ 425,818	\$ 67,379	\$ 18,484	\$ 471,990	\$ 983,671	30	4.128969672	46
Illinois	764,203	\$ 1,180,084	\$ 280,998	\$ 67,099	\$ 1,623,723	\$ 3,151,903	10	4.124430599	47
Connecticut	215,316	\$ 309,790	\$ 74,104	\$ 24,520	\$ 464,585	\$ 872,999	34	4.054495885	48
Michigan	680,417	\$ 1,391,510	\$ 171,896	\$ 43,063	\$ 1,101,665	\$ 2,708,135	11	3.980112527	49
Pennsylvania	980,529	\$ 1,720,685	\$ 296,410	\$ 75,898	\$ 1,754,069	\$ 3,847,062	4	3.923455274	50
Indiana	498,944	\$ 873,835	\$ 131,325	\$ 24,296	\$ 913,962	\$ 1,943,418	16	3.895058951	51
Delaware	78,687	\$ 145,450	\$ 29,797	\$ 5,725	\$ 122,487	\$ 303,459	45	3.856515119	52
New Jersey	441,820	\$ 774,174	\$ 164,539	\$ 47,093	\$ 629,453	\$ 1,615,259	18	3.655919949	53

Despite Indiana being the state with the 16th largest veteran population, Indiana ranks 51 out of 53 states and territories in terms of benefits paid. The analysis is based on the Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) National Center for Veterans Analysis and Statistic spreadsheet titled "Fiscal Year 2012 Geographic Distribution of VA Expenditures (GDX)".

FY12 GEOGRAPHIC DISTRIBUTION OF VA EXPENDITURES (GDY)

INDIANA										
Expenditures in \$000s										
County/ Congressional District	Veteran Population*	Total Expenditure	Compensation & Pension	Construction	Education & Vocational Rehabilitation/ Employment	Loan Guaranty#	General Operating Expenses	Insurance & Indemnities	Medical Care	Unique Patients**
ADAMS	1,952	\$ 4,937	\$ 2,280	\$ -	\$ 291	\$ -	\$ -	\$ 48	\$ 2,318	470
ALLEN	24,834	\$ 104,017	\$ 40,967	\$ -	\$ 8,502	\$ -	\$ 576	\$ 1,116	\$ 52,855	6,953
BARTHOLOMEW	5,947	\$ 17,907	\$ 9,005	\$ -	\$ 1,133	\$ -	\$ -	\$ 353	\$ 7,416	1,185
BENTON	694	\$ 3,082	\$ 945	\$ -	\$ 106	\$ -	\$ -	\$ 3	\$ 2,029	176
BLACKFORD	1,151	\$ 5,277	\$ 2,883	\$ -	\$ 151	\$ -	\$ -	\$ 31	\$ 2,211	412
BOONE	3,814	\$ 11,331	\$ 5,345	\$ -	\$ 970	\$ -	\$ -	\$ 194	\$ 4,822	708
BROWN	1,534	\$ 4,763	\$ 1,619	\$ -	\$ 124	\$ -	\$ -	\$ 59	\$ 2,961	437
CARROLL	2,026	\$ 4,871	\$ 2,438	\$ -	\$ 211	\$ -	\$ -	\$ 41	\$ 2,181	390
CASS	3,541	\$ 11,690	\$ 6,217	\$ -	\$ 468	\$ -	\$ -	\$ 193	\$ 4,812	828
CLARK	9,406	\$ 45,395	\$ 19,273	\$ -	\$ 3,051	\$ -	\$ -	\$ 667	\$ 22,403	2,833
CLAY	2,421	\$ 10,086	\$ 5,232	\$ -	\$ 559	\$ -	\$ -	\$ 157	\$ 4,138	709
CLINTON	2,722	\$ 7,996	\$ 3,396	\$ -	\$ 439	\$ -	\$ -	\$ 255	\$ 3,905	437
CRAWFORD	936	\$ 4,539	\$ 2,089	\$ -	\$ 146	\$ -	\$ -	\$ 12	\$ 2,292	320
DAVISS	2,075	\$ 7,062	\$ 3,945	\$ -	\$ 289	\$ -	\$ -	\$ 40	\$ 2,787	555
DEARBORN	4,455	\$ 17,505	\$ 6,672	\$ -	\$ 1,613	\$ -	\$ -	\$ 214	\$ 9,007	1,309
DECATUR	1,920	\$ 6,443	\$ 2,892	\$ -	\$ 342	\$ -	\$ -	\$ 18	\$ 3,191	483
DE KALB	2,904	\$ 13,354	\$ 6,808	\$ -	\$ 602	\$ -	\$ -	\$ 220	\$ 5,724	890
DELAWARE	9,220	\$ 37,436	\$ 18,301	\$ -	\$ 2,673	\$ -	\$ -	\$ 413	\$ 16,048	2,514
DUBOIS	3,069	\$ 8,093	\$ 4,080	\$ -	\$ 505	\$ -	\$ -	\$ 245	\$ 3,263	763
ELKHART	11,684	\$ 36,319	\$ 17,829	\$ -	\$ 1,885	\$ -	\$ -	\$ 409	\$ 16,196	3,407
FAYETTE	2,158	\$ 7,550	\$ 3,631	\$ -	\$ 228	\$ -	\$ -	\$ 117	\$ 3,575	569
FLOYD	7,043	\$ 26,821	\$ 12,734	\$ -	\$ 1,747	\$ -	\$ 179	\$ 425	\$ 11,735	1,801
FOUNTAIN	1,415	\$ 6,828	\$ 2,943	\$ -	\$ 152	\$ -	\$ -	\$ 20	\$ 3,713	427
FRANKLIN	1,576	\$ 5,510	\$ 2,258	\$ -	\$ 218	\$ -	\$ -	\$ 28	\$ 3,006	487
FULTON	1,696	\$ 6,498	\$ 2,746	\$ -	\$ 201	\$ -	\$ -	\$ 62	\$ 3,489	548
GIBSON	2,561	\$ 8,531	\$ 4,233	\$ -	\$ 333	\$ -	\$ -	\$ 65	\$ 3,900	728
GRANT	5,928	\$ 81,034	\$ 23,051	\$ 2,126	\$ 1,977	\$ -	\$ 2,740	\$ 178	\$ 50,960	2,830
GREENE	3,434	\$ 13,136	\$ 7,794	\$ -	\$ 771	\$ -	\$ -	\$ 63	\$ 4,508	853
HAMILTON	17,464	\$ 46,643	\$ 24,251	\$ -	\$ 5,937	\$ -	\$ -	\$ 1,232	\$ 15,222	2,503
HANCOCK	6,271	\$ 25,780	\$ 15,021	\$ -	\$ 2,046	\$ -	\$ -	\$ 517	\$ 8,197	1,198
HARRISON	3,258	\$ 15,922	\$ 7,671	\$ -	\$ 796	\$ -	\$ -	\$ 114	\$ 7,341	1,041
HENDRICKS	13,169	\$ 40,137	\$ 18,946	\$ -	\$ 3,436	\$ -	\$ -	\$ 703	\$ 17,052	2,428
HENRY	4,180	\$ 15,265	\$ 7,997	\$ -	\$ 678	\$ -	\$ -	\$ 179	\$ 6,411	870
HOWARD	7,940	\$ 29,062	\$ 16,635	\$ -	\$ 2,105	\$ -	\$ -	\$ 238	\$ 10,084	1,733
HUNTINGTON	2,828	\$ 12,939	\$ 6,549	\$ -	\$ 646	\$ -	\$ -	\$ 121	\$ 5,623	924
JACKSON	3,030	\$ 10,815	\$ 5,296	\$ -	\$ 491	\$ -	\$ -	\$ 218	\$ 4,811	772
JASPER	2,654	\$ 7,226	\$ 3,779	\$ -	\$ 580	\$ -	\$ -	\$ 141	\$ 2,726	538
JAY	1,817	\$ 5,795	\$ 2,424	\$ -	\$ 179	\$ -	\$ -	\$ 42	\$ 3,150	502
JEFFERSON	2,754	\$ 10,424	\$ 5,231	\$ -	\$ 378	\$ -	\$ -	\$ 228	\$ 4,588	762

FY12 GEOGRAPHIC DISTRIBUTION OF VA EXPENDITURES (GDY)

INDIANA										
Expenditures in \$000s										
County/ Congressional District	Veteran Population*	Total Expenditure	Compensation & Pension	Construction	Education & Vocational Rehabilitation/ Employment	Loan Guaranty#	General Operating Expenses	Insurance & Indemnities	Medical Care	Unique Patients**
JENNINGS	2,243	\$ 9,684	\$ 4,100	\$ -	\$ 246	\$ -	\$ -	\$ 14	\$ 5,324	553
JOHNSON	12,038	\$ 44,725	\$ 20,660	\$ -	\$ 4,805	\$ -	\$ -	\$ 531	\$ 18,729	2,493
KNOX	3,090	\$ 12,944	\$ 7,001	\$ -	\$ 540	\$ -	\$ -	\$ 183	\$ 5,220	917
KOSCIUSKO	5,324	\$ 16,928	\$ 7,821	\$ -	\$ 910	\$ -	\$ -	\$ 269	\$ 7,927	1,406
LAGRANGE	1,783	\$ 5,834	\$ 2,925	\$ -	\$ 221	\$ -	\$ -	\$ 144	\$ 2,544	491
LAKE	34,648	\$ 117,275	\$ 50,584	\$ -	\$ 7,300	\$ -	\$ -	\$ 1,624	\$ 57,767	7,869
LA PORTE	10,573	\$ 25,181	\$ 12,348	\$ -	\$ 1,662	\$ -	\$ -	\$ 531	\$ 10,640	1,917
LAWRENCE	4,097	\$ 14,781	\$ 8,290	\$ -	\$ 941	\$ -	\$ -	\$ 189	\$ 5,361	1,112
MADISON	11,611	\$ 42,739	\$ 23,021	\$ -	\$ 2,097	\$ -	\$ -	\$ 506	\$ 17,116	2,635
MARION	66,241	\$ 403,366	\$ 127,695	\$ 12,197	\$ 27,225	\$ -	\$ 40,661	\$ 3,614	\$ 191,973	17,996
MARSHALL	3,145	\$ 9,291	\$ 4,797	\$ -	\$ 604	\$ -	\$ -	\$ 129	\$ 3,761	964
MARTIN	1,052	\$ 3,863	\$ 2,322	\$ -	\$ 227	\$ -	\$ -	\$ 6	\$ 1,308	296
MIAMI	3,621	\$ 19,855	\$ 11,261	\$ -	\$ 1,021	\$ -	\$ -	\$ 170	\$ 7,403	1,405
MONROE	7,684	\$ 28,976	\$ 13,520	\$ -	\$ 4,653	\$ -	\$ -	\$ 415	\$ 10,388	2,226
MONTGOMERY	3,129	\$ 10,314	\$ 3,822	\$ -	\$ 301	\$ -	\$ -	\$ 72	\$ 6,119	722
MORGAN	6,889	\$ 26,104	\$ 12,183	\$ -	\$ 1,961	\$ -	\$ -	\$ 134	\$ 11,826	1,496
NEWTON	1,420	\$ 3,962	\$ 1,501	\$ -	\$ 84	\$ -	\$ -	\$ 18	\$ 2,360	269
NOBLE	3,215	\$ 12,683	\$ 5,778	\$ -	\$ 697	\$ -	\$ -	\$ 215	\$ 5,993	893
OHIO	576	\$ 1,851	\$ 697	\$ -	\$ 37	\$ -	\$ -	\$ 1	\$ 1,117	180
ORANGE	1,712	\$ 5,578	\$ 2,597	\$ -	\$ 322	\$ -	\$ -	\$ 19	\$ 2,641	458
OWEN	2,259	\$ 8,905	\$ 4,655	\$ -	\$ 385	\$ -	\$ -	\$ 92	\$ 3,772	565
PARKE	1,500	\$ 5,805	\$ 2,815	\$ -	\$ 106	\$ -	\$ -	\$ 54	\$ 2,829	437
PERRY	1,657	\$ 5,523	\$ 2,707	\$ -	\$ 128	\$ -	\$ -	\$ 20	\$ 2,668	415
PIKE	1,083	\$ 3,235	\$ 1,786	\$ -	\$ 71	\$ -	\$ -	\$ 18	\$ 1,360	261
PORTER	14,177	\$ 32,708	\$ 15,731	\$ -	\$ 3,457	\$ -	\$ -	\$ 578	\$ 12,943	2,248
POSEY	2,134	\$ 6,757	\$ 3,297	\$ -	\$ 319	\$ -	\$ -	\$ 99	\$ 3,042	529
PULASKI	1,082	\$ 3,828	\$ 1,865	\$ -	\$ 353	\$ -	\$ -	\$ 44	\$ 1,567	276
PUTNAM	2,774	\$ 11,684	\$ 5,853	\$ -	\$ 440	\$ -	\$ -	\$ 16	\$ 5,375	717
RANDOLPH	1,918	\$ 8,493	\$ 3,945	\$ -	\$ 319	\$ -	\$ -	\$ 74	\$ 4,155	676
RIPLEY	2,460	\$ 9,145	\$ 4,584	\$ -	\$ 540	\$ -	\$ -	\$ 116	\$ 3,903	624
RUSH	1,579	\$ 4,666	\$ 2,080	\$ -	\$ 245	\$ -	\$ -	\$ 10	\$ 2,331	319
ST. JOSEPH	18,906	\$ 54,944	\$ 28,804	\$ -	\$ 4,864	\$ -	\$ -	\$ 1,040	\$ 20,236	5,484
SCOTT	2,012	\$ 9,344	\$ 5,064	\$ -	\$ 296	\$ -	\$ -	\$ 47	\$ 3,937	617
SHELBY	3,825	\$ 13,706	\$ 5,665	\$ -	\$ 847	\$ -	\$ -	\$ 125	\$ 7,069	872
SPENCER	1,697	\$ 6,615	\$ 3,601	\$ -	\$ 247	\$ -	\$ -	\$ 70	\$ 2,697	466
STARKE	2,026	\$ 5,479	\$ 2,290	\$ -	\$ 320	\$ -	\$ -	\$ 22	\$ 2,847	453
STEBEN	2,531	\$ 10,677	\$ 5,170	\$ -	\$ 505	\$ -	\$ -	\$ 73	\$ 4,929	741
SULLIVAN	2,252	\$ 6,566	\$ 3,713	\$ -	\$ 195	\$ -	\$ -	\$ 20	\$ 2,639	490
SWITZERLAND	754	\$ 3,209	\$ 1,221	\$ -	\$ 128	\$ -	\$ -	\$ 25	\$ 1,835	228

FY12 GEOGRAPHIC DISTRIBUTION OF VA EXPENDITURES (GDX)

INDIANA										
Expenditures in \$000s										
County/ Congressional District	Veteran Population*	Total Expenditure	Compensation & Pension	Construction	Education & Vocational Rehabilitation/ Employment	Loan Guaranty#	General Operating Expenses	Insurance & Indemnities	Medical Care	Unique Patients**
TIPPECANOE	10,893	\$ 37,948	\$ 17,775	\$ -	\$ 4,556	\$ -	\$ -	\$ 601	\$ 15,016	2,115
TIPTON	1,370	\$ 4,701	\$ 2,694	\$ -	\$ 258	\$ -	\$ -	\$ 7	\$ 1,743	295
UNION	533	\$ 2,500	\$ 995	\$ -	\$ 96	\$ -	\$ -	\$ 2	\$ 1,408	155
VANDEBURGH	13,573	\$ 57,569	\$ 26,584	\$ -	\$ 3,494	\$ -	\$ -	\$ 969	\$ 26,522	4,378
VERMILLION	1,546	\$ 7,978	\$ 3,180	\$ -	\$ 205	\$ -	\$ -	\$ 6	\$ 4,587	485
VIGO	8,633	\$ 33,561	\$ 16,423	\$ -	\$ 2,197	\$ -	\$ -	\$ 351	\$ 14,591	2,604
WABASH	2,950	\$ 11,021	\$ 5,430	\$ -	\$ 309	\$ -	\$ -	\$ 394	\$ 4,889	831
WARREN	675	\$ 2,758	\$ 978	\$ -	\$ 57	\$ -	\$ -	\$ 5	\$ 1,717	216
WARRICK	5,174	\$ 16,732	\$ 9,010	\$ -	\$ 968	\$ -	\$ -	\$ 329	\$ 6,426	1,144
WASHINGTON	2,161	\$ 10,978	\$ 4,286	\$ -	\$ 465	\$ -	\$ -	\$ 284	\$ 5,943	669
WAYNE	6,116	\$ 26,657	\$ 11,343	\$ -	\$ 903	\$ -	\$ -	\$ 269	\$ 14,141	1,893
WELLS	2,095	\$ 7,139	\$ 3,215	\$ -	\$ 362	\$ -	\$ -	\$ 132	\$ 3,431	556
WHITE	2,148	\$ 7,477	\$ 4,190	\$ -	\$ 337	\$ -	\$ -	\$ 136	\$ 2,814	532
WHITLEY	2,879	\$ 9,637	\$ 4,553	\$ -	\$ 542	\$ -	\$ -	\$ 110	\$ 4,432	648
INDIANA (Totals)	498,944	\$ 2,001,898	\$ 873,935	\$ 14,324	\$ 131,325	\$ -	\$ 44,156	\$ 24,296	\$ 913,962	126,530
CONG. DIST (01)	52,467	\$ 161,997	\$ 71,446	\$ -	\$ 11,287	\$ -	\$ -	\$ 2,343	\$ 76,922	10,947
CONG. DIST (02)	53,318	\$ 159,761	\$ 81,473	\$ -	\$ 11,068	\$ -	\$ -	\$ 2,370	\$ 64,850	13,564
CONG. DIST (03)	48,363	\$ 186,470	\$ 81,076	\$ -	\$ 12,619	\$ -	\$ -	\$ 2,362	\$ 90,413	13,473
CONG. DIST (04)	64,027	\$ 219,516	\$ 101,701	\$ -	\$ 19,786	\$ -	\$ -	\$ 2,940	\$ 95,090	13,441
CONG. DIST (05)	62,908	\$ 269,805	\$ 117,434	\$ 458	\$ 17,377	\$ -	\$ 3,316	\$ 3,857	\$ 127,363	14,561
CONG. DIST (06)	54,592	\$ 203,420	\$ 96,912	\$ 1,669	\$ 10,509	\$ -	\$ -	\$ 2,133	\$ 92,198	14,147
CONG. DIST (07)	48,677	\$ 348,376	\$ 107,327	\$ 12,197	\$ 22,883	\$ -	\$ 40,661	\$ 2,548	\$ 162,761	14,327
CONG. DIST (08)	57,221	\$ 222,390	\$ 111,080	\$ -	\$ 11,272	\$ -	\$ -	\$ 2,472	\$ 97,566	16,192
CONG. DIST (09)	57,372	\$ 230,161	\$ 105,387	\$ -	\$ 14,524	\$ -	\$ 179	\$ 3,270	\$ 106,800	15,878
INDIANA (Totals)	498,944	\$ 2,001,898	\$ 873,935	\$ 14,324	\$ 131,325	\$ -	\$ 44,156	\$ 24,296	\$ 913,962	126,530

FY12 GEOGRAPHIC DISTRIBUTION OF VA EXPENDITURES (GDX)

INDIANA										
Expenditures in \$000s										
County/ Congressional District	Veteran Population*	Total Expenditure	Compensation & Pension	Construction	Education & Vocational Rehabilitation/ Employment	Loan Guaranty#	General Operating Expenses	Insurance & Indemnities	Medical Care	Unique Patients**
Notes:										
* Veteran population estimates, as of September 30, 2012, are produced by the VA Office of the Actuary (VetPop 2011).										
# Prior to FY 08, "Loan Guaranty" expenditures were included in the Education & Vocational Rehabilitation and Employment (E&VRE) programs. Currently, all "Loan Guaranty" expenditures are attributed to Travis County, TX, where all Loan Guaranty payments are processed. VA will continue to improve data collection for future GDX reports to better distribute loan expenditures at the state, county and congressional district levels.										
** Unique patients are patients who received treatment at a VA health care facility. Data are provided by the Allocation Resource Center (ARC).										
Expenditure data sources: USASpending.gov for Compensation & Pension (C&P) and Education and Vocational Rehabilitation and Employment (EVRE) Benefits; Veterans Benefits Administration Insurance Center for the Insurance costs; the VA Financial Management System (FMS) for Construction, Medical Research, General Operating Expenses, and certain C&P and Readjustment data; and the Allocation Resource Center (ARC) for Medical Care costs.										
1. Expenditures are rounded to the nearest thousand dollars. For example, \$500 to \$1,000 are rounded to \$1; \$0 to \$499 are rounded to \$0; and "\$ -" = 0 or no expenditures.										
2. The Compensation & Pension expenditures include dollars for the following programs: veterans' compensation for service-connected disabilities; dependency and indemnity compensation for service-connected deaths; veterans' pension for nonservice-connected disabilities; and burial and other benefits to veterans and their survivors.										
3. Medical Care expenditures include dollars for medical services, medical administration, facility maintenance, educational support, research support, and other overhead items. Medical Care expenditures do not include dollars for construction or other non-medical support.										
4. Medical Care expenditures are based on where patients live instead of where care is delivered.										

Good afternoon. My name is Jim Bauerle, Brigadier General, United States Army, retired. I speak at this time as the Legislative Chair of the Military – Veterans Coalition of Indiana. The Military Veterans Coalition of Indiana’s mission is to promote the needs of the military community of Indiana including active, National Guard, Reserve, retirees and their families. We will encourage the Indiana Government to enact legislation recognizing the honor brought to the state and nation by their service. This will be communicated through personal contact, the media and website to the government representatives of Indiana and other agencies as deemed necessary.

The document I provided identify 21 items which were developed by seeking input from our member organizations. Additionally, I have personally met with the senior leadership and senior full time representative of the Big Four (AM Legion, VFW, AMVETS, DAV) and NGAI. The Coalition membership includes representatives from all these organizations and the Order of the Purple Heart, Reserve Officers Association, MOAA, Korean War Vets, Retired Federal Employees, and several others. The American Legion has not yet met to finalize their “official” endorsement as that happens at their state convention later this year. I have been told by Commander Rock Effron and Adjutant Hugh Dagley III that they intend to submit a resolution to adopt this documents content. The other members have indicated they fully support these efforts.

The Goals provide a short description with brief rationale as to the needs identified. Our organizations request this Commission author legislation, sponsor, support, and seek all legislators to this agenda. Items are not listed in priority as we believe all need to be done.

Indiana is a very patriotic state and that is clearly observable in the military monuments, parades, school veterans day celebrations, community celebrations on Memorial Day, The 4th of July, Veterans Day and unfortunately when we lay to rest those Hoosiers who gave their live defending our freedom. When The Military Veterans Coalition of Indiana reviews Indiana as a military and veteran friendly state—we conclude Indiana is NOT. Indiana continues to lag behind other states in veterans benefits and the fact that we have identified 21 issues in an off budget year supports that claim.

I am prepared to present each item, should you desire, or answer questions at this time, or at any time in the future regarding the items identified in this document. Members of the Military – Veterans Coalition of Indiana would gladly meet to discuss further our goals, stand ready to assist in preparation of bills, and will be present to testify as we have so often in the past.

**Exhibit 3
Commission on Military and
Veterans Affairs
Meeting #1, 9/25/2013**

Military - Veterans Coalition Of Indiana
2014 Legislative GOALS

1. Expanding the eligibility to access the Military Family Relief Fund to all Indiana qualified veterans. Current documentation of a qualifying need to be aided by the Fund would remain the same.

***Rationale:** Existing qualified Veterans are limited to service since 2001 and only if need is requested within three years of deployment. Many veterans serving prior and since 2001 have needs which extend beyond the three year limit. No time period should be required; only documentation of a qualifying need.*

2. Increasing funding for the Veterans' Affairs Trust Fund (VATF) by adding:

- a. A check block and space to list an amount on State Income Tax forms to enable taxpayers to donate all or part of tax refunds.
- b. A check block to contribute \$1.00 to the VATF.
- c. A unique Lottery scratch off ticket with proceeds to benefit Indiana Veterans via the Trust Fund.

***Rationale:** More funds in the fund will enable more eligible military families to be assisted. The funds would be generated by voluntary contributions and purchases by Indiana residents or others.*

3. Increased financial remedy and punitive damages for hiring discrimination against those serving in the military (Active or Reserve Component).

***Rationale:** There is a strong case to be made that the clear public policy of protecting our military personnel from employment discrimination deserves judicial protection through the creation of a new exception to the at-will employment doctrine. If the courts in Indiana and elsewhere don't do this, then the legislatures should (and vice versa). Every legislator, judge, and citizen would have to agree that leaving the members of our armed services subject to employment discrimination when looking for a new job, without an adequate remedy, is not an acceptable state of affairs.*

4. Resolution to review and revise the County Veteran Service Offices (CVSO) structure that was established in 1945 and has not changed since then.

***Rationale:** Current veteran population by county varies significantly and the duties and responsibilities of CVSO should be studied and revamped to meet the needs of veterans in the 21st Century.*

5. Resolution to analyze and make recommendations how to implement the VA Claims Process and VA Claims Appeal Process as established at William and Mary College in Virginia and with input from Veteran Service Organization's Veteran Service Offices. Include development of a Memorandum of understanding with Veteran Service Organizations to support the developed appeal process.

***Rationale:** The William & Mary's Puller Veterans Benefits Clinic is being touted by members of Congress as a national model for inexpensively dealing with the Veterans Administration's backlog. Between 2009 and August 2012, the clinic has helped 46 clients with submission of 343 claimed injuries or illnesses. Since 2008, 30 law schools in 18 states have developed clinical programs that specifically assist veterans in some manner. Financial assistance is one of the things that could help schools currently helping veterans take on more clients*

or get other schools' programs off the ground, said Stacey-Rae Simcox, an Army veteran who serves as the managing attorney at William & Mary's Puller Veterans Benefits Clinic.

School officials said it's difficult to pinpoint the exact cost of the clinic because it uses existing space and faculty, but Simcox said William & Mary's program runs on a 'shoestring' budget.

The current Veteran Service Organization's Veteran Service Offices support Hoosiers today from start to conclusion, including appeals which occur in Washington DC. CVSOs need a process should appeals be required to adequately support Hoosiers appealing claims decisions.

6. Providing a Veterans and Reserve Component hiring preference for state employment (exemption from this for positions that require registration with job service).

Rationale: Veterans and Reservists have sacrificed by serving in our military and deserve special consideration when state government seeks to fill vacancies. See Georgia law.

7. Providing Job Training Priority for all Active Component and Reserve Component Service Members who have served for at least 30 days.

Rationale: IC22-4. 1-4-3 only provides priority for National Guard. This discriminates against the thousands of Reservists who serve in the Army Reserve, Navy Reserve, Marine Reserve, Air Force Reserve, and Coast Guard Reserve. Hoosiers who are on Active Duty and transitioning to civilian or reserve should also be afforded this.

8. Military and Veterans College Credit Transfer.

Rationale: Today those serving in the military take many college courses on-line and at several different places of higher learning. These college credits should be completely transferable and be applied toward the pursuit of a college degree obtained from a state university. Indiana should try to improve veteran reintegration because veterans bring solid financial support via their education benefits. Upon graduation they are more likely to provide positive citizen contributions because they are more mature and more likely to contribute to the state economy.

9. Amendment to Fix the National Guard Tuition Supplement Program.

Rationale: IC21-13-4. The State of Indiana has a generous Tuition Supplement Program for our Indiana National Guard members, but that system is subject to abuse. Currently there are no requirements for course completion or minimum acceptable standards for payment of the supplement or continuation in the program. We propose a fix to the State Program to mirror Federal requirements for qualification/reimbursement of State dollars in support of the State program.

10. Exempting ALL Active Component and Reserve Component Service Members from jury duty if they are on orders.

Rationale: IC10-16-16-1 only exempts National Guard. This discriminates against the thousands of Active Component and Reservists who serve in the Army Reserve, Navy Reserve, Marine Reserve, Air Force Reserve, and Coast Guard Reserve.

11. Free Lifetime Fishing & Hunting License for Veterans

Rationale: Any honorably discharged resident veteran may take fish, live bait, clams, mussels, turtles and

frogs without permit (except trout permit or daily tag in areas where prescribed), and may take wildlife with permit (except deer and turkey hunting permits and the Migratory Bird Hunting Permit as prescribed); provided, while hunting or fishing s/he carries a Lifetime Fishing & Hunting License to be issued based upon certified statement of eligibility from the Veterans Administration, Federal DD Form 214, NG Form 22 or similar Reserve form.

12a. Veterans Driver's License issued without charge.

Rationale: Driver's license issued without charge to: (1) Veterans who were residents of Indiana at the time of enlistment or commissioning and are residents at time of application for the license or who have been resident of Indiana for at least two years immediately preceding the date of application for the license. Individuals must have served on active duty in the armed Forces of the United States or on active duty in a reserve component, including the National Guard, during wartime or any conflict when personnel were committed by the President, except for periodic transfer from reserve status to active duty status for training purposes, and who were discharged or separated under honorable conditions. The individual need not have been assigned to a unit or division which directly participated in such war or conflict. (2) any member or former member of the national Guard or Reserve Forces who has served 20 or more years creditable service.

12b. Honorary Surviving Spouse of Veterans Driver's License issued without charge.

Rationale: Issues without charge to: (1) any Indiana resident who is the surviving spouse of a Veteran who was eligible for a Veteran's License, so long as the surviving spouse does not remarry; or (2) any resident of Indiana who is the spouse of a Veteran who qualify for a Veteran's license were to not for the Veteran's permanent disabilities which preclude the operation of a motor vehicle.

13. Veteran ID Cards.

Rationale: Personal identification cards are available to Veterans who do not have a motor vehicle driver's license and who would otherwise, be entitled to issuance of a Veteran's driver's license.

14. Eliminate Fees for Active Duty, National Guard, Reserve, retired military and veterans.

Rationale: Currently, military members, Active duty, Guard and Reserve, enjoy a free annual pass to our National Park System. Additionally, our retired military and veterans deserve this also. Our nation owes a debt of gratitude to our servicemen and women who make great sacrifices to serve our country. These Hoosiers currently serving or who served and were discharged under honorable conditions should have similar benefits to visit/use state parks, historical sites, and recreational areas at no charge. A 25% reduced fee for all facilities, lodging, and any recreational activities in the State of Indiana will be granted by the park upon presentation of the entitlement card. Eligibility: Active, Guard, Reserve, Retiree, or Veteran who is legal resident of Indiana and has been certified. For the purpose, a veteran is a veteran who has been discharged under honorable conditions from any branch of the armed forces of the United States as confirmed by the Federal Veterans Administration.

15. Remission of fees for dependents of disabled veterans.

Rationale: Repeal IC21-14-4-2.5 return to pre-2011 criteria when dependents of all service connected disabled veterans received full remission of fees at any State supported post secondary school or university in the State of Indiana. Present remission is based upon the percentage of disability, thus creating impartial treatment of those who served since July 2011.

16. Recognition of ALL Military Service Organizations and Veterans Service Organizations in the Indiana Code.

***Rationale:** ICI10-18-6-1 several organizations listed in the Indiana Code no longer exists or their name is incorrect. Additionally, several other organizations have been excluded from the lists. This proposed legislation eliminates the need for a list and retains the requirements to be met by military service organizations and veterans' service organizations.*

17. Resolution to validate the "Missing In America Project" that insures respectful and honorable disposition of Veteran cremated remains abandon in Indiana funeral homes.

***Rationale:** Several Indiana Funeral Homes currently do not recognize the "Missing In America Project" and thus refusing to turn over Veteran cremated remains. This Resolution is intended to reinforce the legitimacy of the "missing In America Project" and promote them as the capstone organization to deal with this issue.*

18. Establish Veterans Treatment Courts throughout the state as part of the current Drug Courts.

***Rationale:** A few counties have established these Courts and the results are positive. Further funding and staffing is needed to expand this Court system throughout the state.*

19. Exemption from ad valorem taxation (property tax) of part of the market value of the residence homestead of a partially disabled veteran by a charitable organization.

***Rationale:** To receive a residence homestead by a charitable organization (i.e. Habit For Humanity) a partially disabled veteran will be financially challenged. The State or any other Municipality should not undertake actions that will further create a hardship for this veteran and their family. Taxation is such a burden.*

20. 100% Property Tax Exemption for Surviving Spouse of Service Member killed in Action or Dies While On Active Duty.

***Rationale:** Surviving spouses could have financial hardships and should be granted this exemption as a measure of gratitude from the State Of Indiana for their loss.*

21. The Indiana Veteran Recovery Plan (IVRP)

***Rationale:** One of the most important missions facing all of us at this time in history is caring for our combat wounded returning home from their deployments, and fighting another battle, the battle to regain their quality of life sacrificed in service to our country. This battle is the support and resources to treat the Iraq and Afghan Signature Wound—Traumatic Brain Injury / Post Traumatic Stress Disorder, also known as the silent wound of the War on Terror. The Oklahoma model for providing Hyperbaric Oxygen Treatment (focusing on TBI), and reimbursing for the costs for treatment is calculated to save ONE BILLION DOLLARS a year! Indiana can, and will benefit from the OK's trail blazing efforts by adopting the mission, and see it through. The resources and patriotic commitment exist to see it through to completion. The most important outcome will be our Guardians of Freedom will get their lives back, and their families will get them back.*

***Outcome desired:** Use existing locations throughout the state on a contract bases to provide Hyperbaric Oxygen Treatment for a Hoosier Service Member or Veteran diagnosed with Traumatic Brain Injury / Post Traumatic Stress Disorder. Study the establishment and operation of additional Hyperbaric Therapy Facilities at Camp Atterbury and at the Indiana Veterans Home (Lafayette, IN) to provide additional capacity needed to*

attack this significant problem now and in the future. These two locations would be long term solutions to support all future operations. Initial implementation in 2014 would use Surplus Funds or an emergency appropriation. Follow on funding in 2015 to come from General Fund. Additionally, in 2015 expand to the two other locations to support long term needs. Further recommend appropriate state health agency negotiates for best price per treatment. Lastly, have Indiana University capture and analyze all data in conjunction with the International Hyperbaric Medical Foundation's (IHMF) national Brain injury Rescue & rehabilitation (NBIRR) Project.

Description of the problem: The level of injured veterans in Indiana is not small. (Traumatic Brain Injury/Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder-TBI/PTSD) Untreated/unresolved TBI/PTSD is expensive and heart breaking. It affects military retention, readiness and the ability for those who have served our nation and state to maintain careers, marriages/relationships, and even their lives.

The Statistical Abstract reveals there are nearly 500,000 Indiana veterans of whom there are 166,470 Vietnam War era veterans and 125,804 Gulf War era veterans.

According to the VA study conducted in 1983 about Vietnam War veterans, 35.8% of those who served in theater or 15.2% of all Vietnam War era Veterans have PTSD (which means they also have mild-Traumatic Brain Injury.) That is over 25,300 Vietnam Era Hoosiers suffering from treatable war injuries.

Gulf War Era Veterans who served in theater have a PTSD/TBI rate of 33% according to the RAND report. There are 125,804 Gulf War Veterans from Indiana as of September 30, 2012. Excluding the Indiana National Guard, that means there are likely around 35,575 Gulf War Era injured. Indiana has contributed over 21,000 National Guard, mostly combat arms forces, to the War, and the combat arms injury rate runs between 50% and 75% or 10,500 to 15,075 men and women. (Note: I believe the NG numbers are understated by 100%-- will need better analysis from ING. If I am correct—this makes it even worse!)

In total then, war injured Hoosiers can be estimated to range between 50,600 and 55,180 veterans who suffer from PTSD, Traumatic Brain Injury, or any of the related post-concussion syndrome symptoms. Most suffer in silence, without VA compensation or any effective treatment.

The cost to our nation and Indiana is estimated to be in excess of \$60,000 per year per veteran (\$40,000 to Indiana); between \$3,036,000,000.00 and \$3,310,800,000.00 annually. The costs to use existing facilities averages \$250 per treatment or about \$12,000 (40 treatments) based upon current MEDICAR payment schedules plus Doctor pre- and post- analysis and prescription of \$150. Cognitive testing would be required before and after as proof of successful treatment. It is estimated that this cost would be less than \$10,000. Additionally, in rare cases, before and after brain Single Photon Emission Computer Tomography (SPECT) and heat scan or MRI scans would cost another \$5,000. The average cost is estimated to be \$13,000 per patient. This is far less than the estimated \$40,000 annual state costs!

The Federal government has shifted costs from these war casualties to the states. The 1921 Veterans Bureau Act requires the Federal Government (Veterans Administration) to AUTOMATICALLY reimburse the state for any treatment that is not provided by the Veterans Health Administration. The proposed solution would include the State Of Indiana Insurance Commission managing and process documents for reimbursement. Thus the costs of treatment would be totally reimbursed. The cost to the State of Indiana would be to administer the claims received from providers and submission to the VA.

Similar challenges exist in the civilian population with first responders, athletes and victims of crime or accident. Many states are establishing centers for treatment, California, Georgia, Florida, Louisiana, Oklahoma, and Texas are a few

Facts bearing on the problem: One of the most important missions facing all of us at this time in history is caring for our combat wounded returning home from their deployments, and fighting another battle, the battle to regain their quality of life sacrificed in service to our country. This battle is the support and resources to treat the Iraq and Afghan Signature Wound—Traumatic Brain Injury / Post Traumatic Stress Disorder, also known as the silent wound of the War on Terror.

Oklahoma is doing just that; Texas is in the process also! The Oklahoma model for providing Hyperbaric Oxygen Treatment (focusing on TBI), and reimbursing for the costs for treatment is calculated to save ONE BILLION DOLLARS a year! Indiana can, and will benefit from the OK's trail blazing efforts by adopting the mission, and see it through. The resources and patriotic commitment exist to see it through to completion. The most important outcome will be our Guardians of Freedom will get their lives back, and their families will get them back.

You hold the power to bring the most effective, proven solution to Hoosiers affected by TBI/PTSD and other brain insults.

Your leadership will help solve what has been Indiana's and America's intractable problem with TBI and PTSD and suicidality among the war's veterans. Currently 22 commit suicide daily and 44 additional attempt and fail. When presented with this rational solution, many other states will follow Indiana's lead. You have the power. You have the authority. The real biological repair solution for this medical condition is available and affordable. Federal funding is achievable to pay for this effective and permanent biological repair for state residents. Oklahoma University and Oklahoma State University have verified the science and patient outcomes. Oklahoma University researchers published with The International Hyperbaric Medical Foundation (IHMF) researchers, and Oklahoma State University treated patients with identical outcomes as IHMF practitioners have experienced nationally. Bureaucrats in Washington DC have suggested further study and analysis is needed. They said the same thing about Agent Orange and Desert Storm Illness. Indiana shouldn't wait!

This plan also reasserts a state's inherent "Police Power" over health, welfare and morals and helps justifiably arrest the erosion of that power from continual incursion by the Federal government, regardless of which party is in power. It also corrects the State's power with respect to third-party health insurance carriers, whose "managed care" decisions have cost the state many extra hundreds of millions and caused needless human misery and tragedy.

Effective treatment is less expensive for the State than the current consequences of leaving these men and women untreated. Consider the current FDA and VA approved treatment IS NO TREATMENT! Psychiatrist counseling and prescribing "mind altering" drugs does not repair the injury, they make "vegetables" out of their "victim"!

The State's next step is to execute the comprehensive and integrated plan and reverse this problem. The Indiana Veteran Recovery Plan (IVRP) will create an effective pathway to treatment that will save lives, restore families, build faith, increase productivity, and increase tax revenue collections. Further, it will reduce unemployment, entitlement, healthcare, incarceration and education costs. Under the IVRP the treatments are supervised and outcomes are measured and validated comprehensively, by those within the state with the appropriate skill and expertise at doing so.

Further, the IVRP includes a pathway to create the infrastructure within the state to sustain and expand treatment to benefit the lives of all state residents. This includes training of state residents and building and maintaining facilities and equipment within the state (creating new employment opportunities in Indiana industry) to meet the healthcare infrastructure needs of the state and across the nation. This plan is paid with revenue from the federal government to treat veterans, and paid by savings in entitlement and safety net programs listed above. All of these results can be projected based upon current scientific knowledge. Under this plan all actual results, with extensive data collection and metrics, are tracked under an IRB-approved study and real results are compared against the expected results, and thus are verified. Full adoption of the IVRP can

be expected to result in millions in savings in the State's budget, with millions more for the Federal government, while improving readiness of both the National Guard, Reserves, first responders, and many others.

In short, this is NOT a plan that has nebulous goals, metrics or outcomes in some far off future. The results are measurable within weeks and months, with current budget year and out year savings that more than justify the program and the steps needed to create it. IVRP creates an integrated program that cost-effectively maximizes the recovery of every brain injured person in the state. Better brains yield better tax revenue, higher incomes, and more productivity, less crime and less personal tragedy. Permanent care-pathways are created within the State. The goal is to maximize recovery by using integrated medical services and verifiably save the state millions in entitlement, incarceration, education, safety net, revenue recovery and create new productivity and jobs under this plan.

Due to the upcoming legislative session being the non-budget year the following Goals will be held for the 2015 session.

1. Securing full State Income tax exempt status for all military income.

Rationale: IC6-3-2-4. *Military service members are a major economic force bringing to the State over one billion dollars per year in disposable income. Every effort should be made and incentives developed to attract military personnel to Indiana. Indiana continues to lose qualified veterans because of the greatly enhanced benefits available in adjacent and other states. Indiana ranks in the bottom 20% in support of military service members. One needs to recognize that several Indiana residents leave our great state each year because their income is reduced by Indiana State Income taxes.*

*States are generally free from federal control in deciding how to tax pensions, but some limits apply. State tax policy cannot discriminate against federal civil service pensions, according to the U.S. Supreme Court decision in Davis v. Michigan (1989), which ended the once common practice of more favorable state tax treatment for state pensions than for federal civil service pensions. In 1992 the U.S. Supreme Court further ruled, in Barker v. Kansas, that states cannot tax U.S. military pensions if they exempt state pensions from taxation. Over time these rulings have produced substantial conformity in the way each state taxes the three kinds of pensions, although differential treatment persists in **Indiana** and New Jersey.*

*Of the 50 states, seven – Alaska, Florida, Nevada, South Dakota, Texas, Washington and Wyoming – do not levy a personal income tax. New Hampshire and Tennessee collect income tax only on interest and dividend income. The District of Columbia and 41 states levy a broad-based personal income tax. Among the 41 states with a broad-based income tax, 36 offer exclusions for some amount of specifically identified type of state or federal pension income or both, a broad income exclusion or a tax credit targeted at the elderly. The District of Columbia provides a public pension exclusion. The five states that do not do so are California, **Indiana**, Nebraska, Rhode Island and Vermont. Some of those five states partially or fully exclude Social Security income from state taxation, and **no state collects income taxes on Railroad Retirement income.** (Source: NCSL Ronald Snell and Bert Waisanen article Jul 07)*

Looking at the economics surrounding this proposed amendment also support this change. The loss in income tax revenue is less than the gain from other taxes like sales, gasoline, car plates, property, and other taxes and fees the state would collect off the revenue spent that would have gone to income taxes. When you add the “saved” Indiana citizens and their families who will return to living in Indiana the tax revenue grows substantially. We believe that between 500 and 1000 people would be added to the tax rolls annually.

Additionally, this will help the brain drain in Indiana and will stimulate growth in business, services, and industry as these new residents and current residents will spend the Indiana income tax savings in Indiana. This is a win – win opportunity!

Lastly, and certainly most importantly, Indiana residents enjoy the many blessings being part of this great republic thanks to Hoosiers who will serve, are serving, and have served in the military. For this, state representatives of your districts in Indiana should support the wishes of your citizens as amended by this proposal.

2. Securing legislative approval for an Indiana State Resettlement/Service Bonus and/or Combat duty pay of up to \$1,000 for military members who are residents of Indiana and have served in a combat zone during the Gulf Wars.

Rationale: *Indiana service members deserve recognition and compensation for their personal sacrifice and economic hardships caused by unit activation and family separation. This would be a continuation of the recognition granted by the State for previous wars. Similar recognition was provided to combat veterans of the Vietnam conflict, Korea, and WWII. See Ohio Law.*

3. Instituting a \$2000 Private Enterprise Indiana Tax Credit for each documented veteran hired as a fulltime employee during their tax year. Business must comply with Federal Tax Credit Guidelines to qualify.

Rationale: *To encourage Indiana businesses to hire Veterans, this credit will be an incentive to put veterans to work in the State. The Federal Government currently offers a \$2000 Federal Tax Credit for this action. Indiana veteran and Reserve Forces unemployment is much higher than the national unemployment rate.*

4. Removing the excise tax credit limit of \$70.00 for a disabled veteran or qualified surviving spouse, and WWI veterans.

Rationale: *IN 6-1.1-12-13(3)(c)(2). Allows veterans with qualifying disabilities who do not own certain types of taxable property to claim credits against the motor vehicle excise tax. Allows the surviving spouses of qualified veterans and World War I veterans who do not own those types of taxable property to claim the credits. Specifies that the amount of the credit is the lesser of the claimant's excise tax liability or \$70. Provides that the maximum number of vehicles for which credits may be claimed is two. (Current law allows such veterans to apply any excess property tax deduction amount to the motor vehicle excise tax as a credit, but owning property is a requirement for claiming the property tax deduction and applying its excess to the excise tax.) This amount continues to diminish in value with time as inflation and other economic pressures increase the value of real property. This change would eliminate revisiting this law and insure deserving disabled veterans would remain whole as was the case prior to 2012.*

5. Removing the property value limitation for a disabled vet to receive a property tax reduction.

Rationale: *IN 6-1.1-12-14(c). Provides disabled veterans relief from property tax based having 90 days of service and being totally disabled or being 62 yrs of age and being at least 10% disabled. The current amount is limited to \$143,160. This amount continues to diminish in value with time as inflation and other economic pressures increase the value of real property. This change would eliminate revisiting this law and insure deserving disabled veterans would remain whole as we believe the General Assembly intended that this tax relief apply.*

Exhibit 4
Commission on Military and
Veterans Affairs
Meeting #1, 9/25/2013

Indiana Department of Veterans Affairs

Director Jim Brown

Deputy Director Russ Eaglin

TRANSFORMATION

September 25, 2013

Why TRANSFORM IDVA and CVSOs?

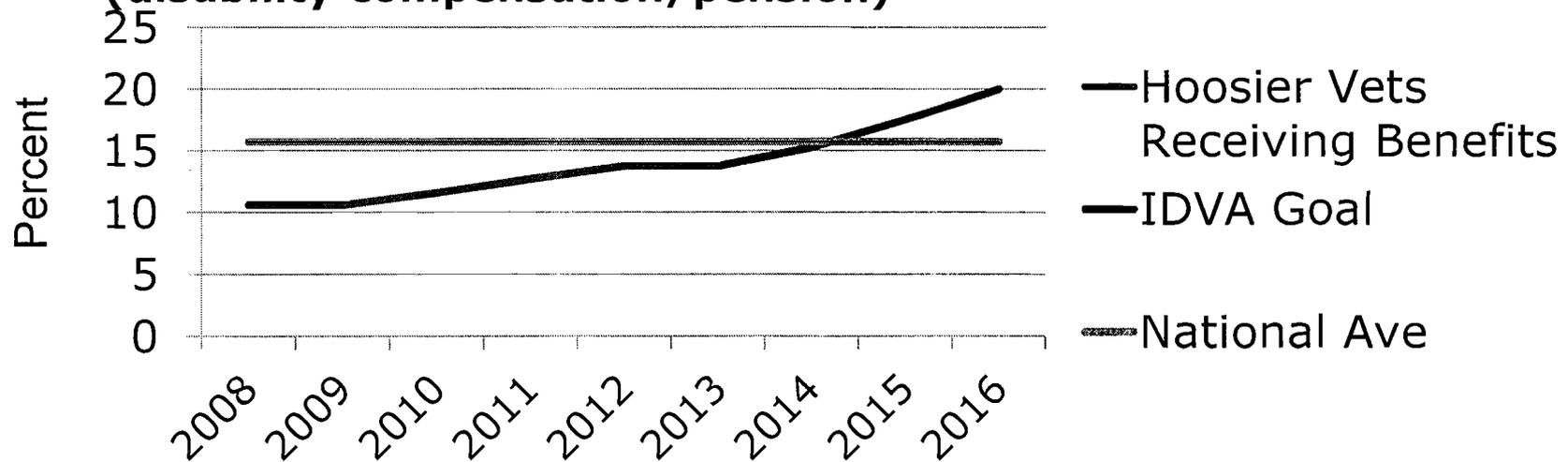
- Indiana is ranked 46th in the US in bringing VA Compensation and Pension dollars into our economy.
- The vast majority of the counties in Indiana are below the federal average in VA Compensation and Pension for our Veterans.
- Un-Employment of Veterans is high.
- Our Veteran population is growing with the downsizing of our Nation's Department of Defense
- Many underserved Veterans are in rural areas.



*Green colored Counties Above National Average
In VA Compensation and Pension
coming into Indiana*

Enhanced Support for County Veteran Service Officers

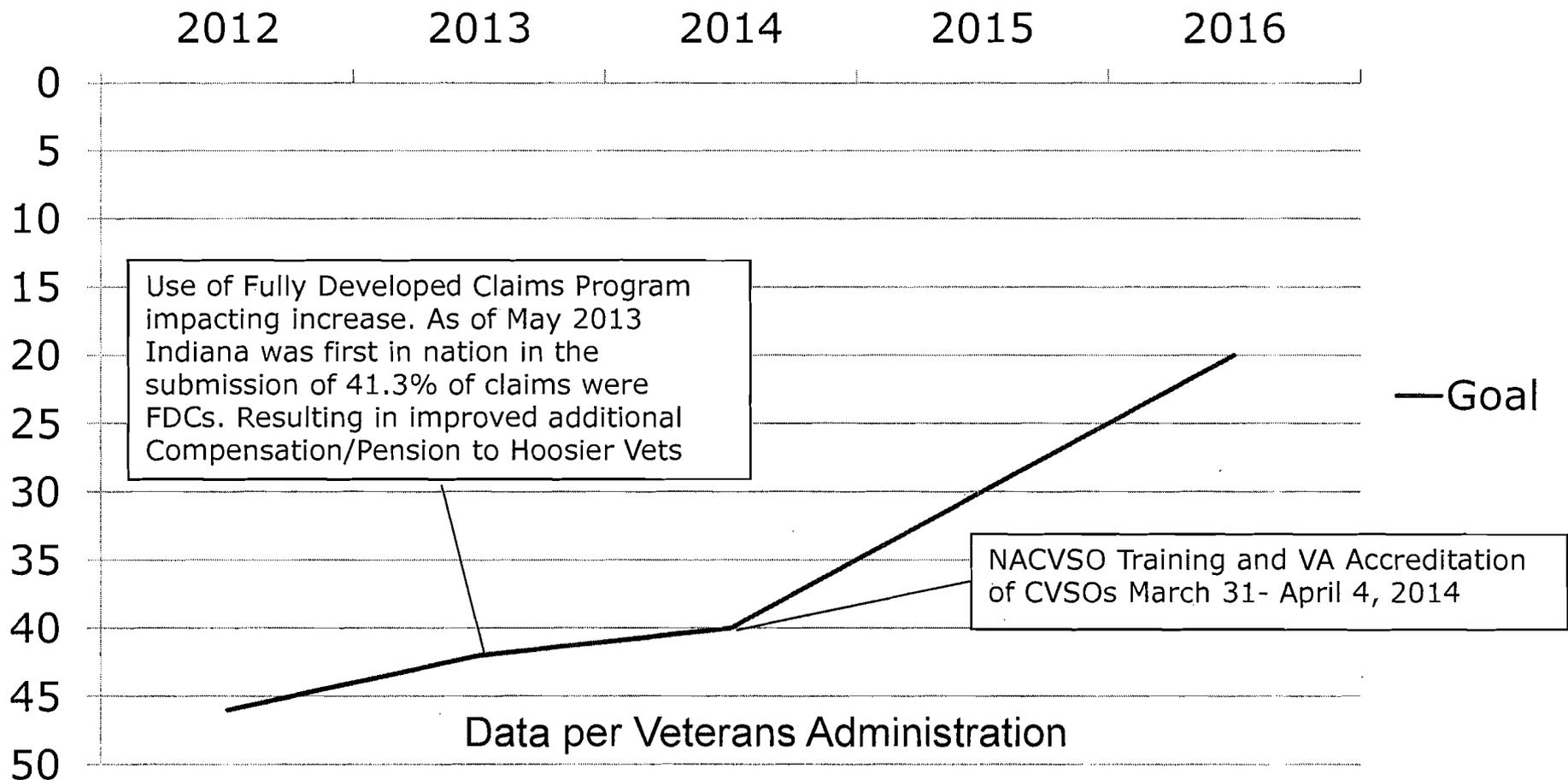
- **Tim Dyke, Director Training and Service has been hired**
 - **Will direct new training program for CVSOs (HEB 1387)**
 - National Association of CVSOs to conduct training March 31-April 4, 2014
 - Grant Program for training, claims management software, computers
 - **Creating CVSO Performance Standards based upon Standard CVSOS Operating Procedures.**
 - **Improved Training and Performance will certainly improve the percentage of Indiana Veterans receiving federal benefits (disability compensation/pension)**



Data from IDVA Metrics and NASDVA

Indiana's National Rank RE: Compensation/Pension to Vets

Indiana VA Comp/Pension Goal





NEW

IDVA's Veterans' Service Center

- **One Stop Veterans' Shop** focusing on benefits, education, employment, care, mental health care, help for women veterans, the homeless and more. (*Referrals to appropriate agencies as need with follow up*)
- **IDVA Veteran Services Toll Free 800 number**
- **Employment**
 - Coordinate jobs found for Veterans by Director of Veteran Opportunity from Lt. Governor's Office
 - Operation Job Ready Veterans
 - National Guard Representatives
 - Reserve Component Representatives
 - VA Work Studies
 - Assist the coordination of employer training needs with the State Approved Agencies to provide targeted education to enhance employment skills
- **Media Outreach**
 - Enhanced IDVA Website (*smart phone friendly*)
 - Employer Links for Veteran Jobs
 - New IDVA "APP" for smart phones to assist with rural outreach (when funds available)
 - Public Relations Campaign
- **Work in partnership with State Agencies to identify opportunities for 3% Veteran Business Enterprise**



Veteran Opportunity Partners

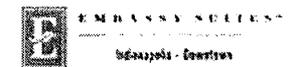
- Memorandum of Understanding with Lt Governors Office established "Director of Veteran Opportunity"
 - Partnership between IDVA and Lt Governor for Veteran Employment and Education initiatives
- Establish new partnerships and work across organizational lines with other Indiana Departments and Organizations to maximize opportunities. Some of IDVA's recent partnerships include:
 - Office of Community and Rural Affairs
 - Office of Energy Development
 - Military Family Research Institute
 - Easter Seals
 - Operation Job Ready Veterans
 - Trade Schools, Junior Colleges, Colleges and Universities
 - Indiana and Indianapolis Chamber

of Commerce

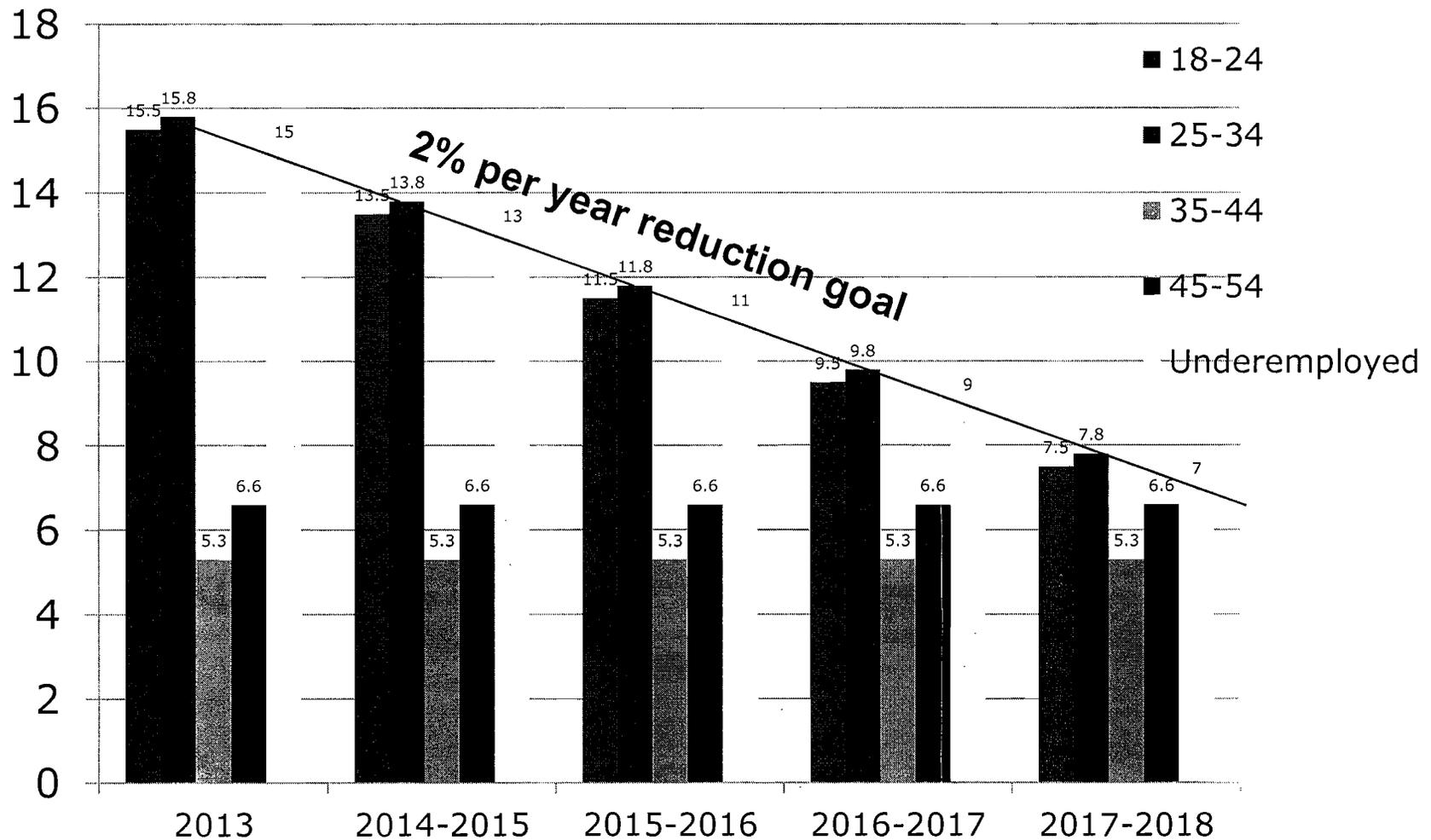
- Mayor's Advisory Council for Veterans (Indianapolis)
- National Guard J-9
- Employer Support Guard and Reserve (ESGR)
- Military and Veteran Coalition



Rolls-Royce



Post 9/11 Veteran Unemployment



Unemployment Data from WorkOne

Best Solutions at IDVA

- **If Indiana is ranked towards the bottom in Veteran Affairs operations we should look to those states that are ranked at or near the top to identify their “Best Practices”.**
- **Implement the Best Solutions in Indiana!**
- **This effort is designed to better serve our Veterans and their families**
- **Target G.I Bill, Compensation, and Pension funds that are not currently coming into Indiana for our Veterans!**

IDVA Challenges

- **Fostering partnerships with County Commissioners and CVSOs during the Veterans' Affairs Transformation**
- **IDVA Budget**
 - **Current Budget limiting**
 - **Filling vacancy of State Service Officer until end of October.**
 - **Hiring full time Woman Veterans Coordinator**
 - **Revisiting the funding for out years 2014 and 2015 to reflect new initiatives**
- **Outreach, especially in rural areas, to let Veterans and their dependents know what services are available and where to get them.**
 - **IDVA Website has been updated to be more interactive and comprehensive**
 - **Funding needed for new IDVA "APP" for Outreach initiative**

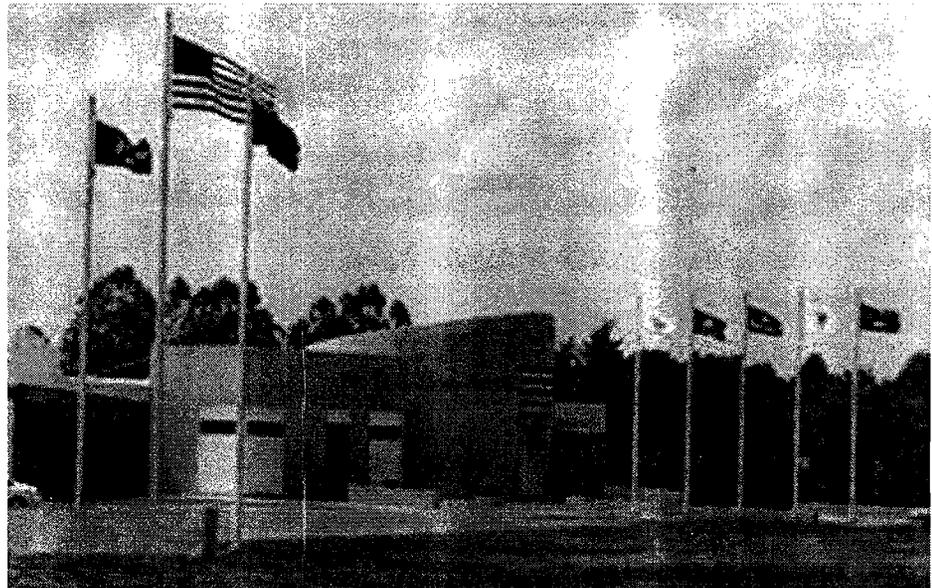
Legislation

- **A few areas of Legislation for the upcoming session are currently being studied for submission.**
- **Obviously for this session, IDVA will target areas where Legislation will make positive changes for Veterans at no cost.**

Indiana Veterans' Memorial Cemetery

Madison, IN

- **The Indiana Veterans Memorial Cemetery is dedicated to Veterans and their families.**
- **PFC Winkley repatriated in August along with his nephew Cpl Winkley.**
- **Grounds are in excellent condition and well managed.**



Indiana Veterans' Home

West Lafayette, IN

- **Personnel**
 - **New Interim Superintendent**
 - **New Interim Director of Nursing**
 - **Improved Moral of Employees**
- **Facilities**
 - **Federal Grant to remodel McArthur Hall**
 - **Improvements in Cemetery**
 - **Volunteer Organizations Assisting**
 - **Commandant's House**
 - **Heating/Air Conditioning decentralization**
- **Support Contracts**
 - **Backup Nursing Contract being evaluated**

Indiana Department of
Veterans Affairs

Director Jim Brown

Deputy Director Russ Eaglin

QUESTIONS

September 25, 2013