

The Senate Military and Veterans' Affairs Committee will meet on Thursday, January 24, 2019 at 1:00 PM in Committee Room 1, 1st Floor, State House Annex, Trenton, New Jersey.

**S2451** Creates program to establish standards for identifying gaps between requirements for licensure as physician assistant and military training accrued related thereto; permits DMVA to offer assistance in exchange for employment.

This bill directs the Secretary of Higher Education, in consultation with the Department of Military and Veterans' Affairs and the Physician Assistant Advisory Committee, within the State Board of Medical Examiners, to create a program to identify and develop methods to maximize higher education credit awarded to veterans and military service members for successful completion of military training, education, and experience in the functions and responsibilities of a physician assistant. The program will include standards for identifying a coursework plan for each veteran or servicemember that will account for any disparity that exists between

military training, education, and experience accrued and what is needed for licensure as a physician assistant.

The bill permits the Department of Military and Veterans' Affairs to offer financial or other assistance to any veteran or servicemember seeking recognition of military training pursuant to the bill in exchange for the veteran's or servicemember's employment after licensure. The duration of the employment is to be reasonable and limited in proportion to the assistance received.

Recommend approval.

**S2452** Provides for increase in allowance paid to war veterans with certain service-connected disabilities.

This bill would increase the annual payments by the State to veterans with certain wartime service-connected disabilities to \$1,800.

Currently, a blind veteran receives \$750 annually under the Blind Veterans' Allowance Program. This amount has not been changed since 1971. A veteran with certain other disabilities also receives \$750 annually under the Paraplegic and Hemiplegic Veterans' Allowance Program. This amount has not been changed since 1981. This bill would increase the annual payments to \$1,800.

Identical bill A4276 introduced, referred to Assembly Military and Veterans' Affairs Committee 6/27/2018.

Fiscal estimate

With a January 1, 2019 effective date.

- This bill increases from \$750 to \$1,800 the annual allowance paid to veterans with certain wartime service-connected disabilities.

- As of July 2018, there were 206 blind and otherwise disabled veterans receiving an allowance under the Blind Veterans' Allowance Program, the Paraplegic and Hemiplegic Veterans' Allowance Program, or both. Veterans may be eligible for both allowance payments. Five of the 206 are receiving both allowances.

- The total cost to provide 206 annual allowances at a \$1,800 level to eligible blind and disabled veterans is estimated to be \$370,800. The increase in the allowance as provided for in this bill is \$1,050 (\$1,800 - \$750) per eligible veteran. Thus, this bill would increase the State's cost to provide an annual allowance to veterans with certain wartime service-connected disabilities by \$216,300, assuming 206 allowances. Costs would be higher or lower each year depending upon the number of veterans who are eligible to receive the allowance.

Recommend approval

**S2930** Exempts honorably discharged United States military veterans from initial insurance producer licensing fee.

Identical bill A1924 introduced, referred to Assembly Military and Veterans' Affairs Committee 1/9/2018.

This bill exempts applicants who have been honorably discharged from the United States military from the initial insurance producer licensing fee. The bill requires the Commissioner of the Department of Banking and Insurance (the “commissioner”) to waive the initial insurance producer licensing fee for any applicant who is a veteran who has received an honorable discharge from a branch of the active or reserve component of the Armed Forces of the United States or the National Guard of any state, provided that the applicant has passed the licensing examination and fulfilled any other requirements for licensure. Following the waiver of the initial licensing fee, the licensee must comply with any other licensing fees imposed by law or regulation.

Under current law, the commissioner may provide for the waiving of fees for disabled war veterans of the United States military service. The bill requires waiver of the initial licensing fee for all qualified applicants who have been honorably discharged from United States military service, but allows the commissioner to provide for the waiving of other fees for disabled veterans.

Recommend approval.

**S2937** The New Jersey Battlefield to Boardroom Act; provides corporation business tax credits and gross income tax credits for qualified wages of certain veterans.

This bill is entitled “The New Jersey Battlefield to Boardroom Act.” The bill provides a corporation business tax credit and gross income tax credit for qualified wages of certain veterans.

The two credits established by this bill provide an employer with a credit in the amount of 10% of the wages paid to a qualified veteran. The credits may not exceed \$1,200 for each qualified veteran per tax year. The bill defines a qualified veteran as a resident of this State initially hired by the taxpayer on or after January 1, 2010 that has been honorably discharged or released under honorable circumstances from active service, occurring on or after January 1, 1965, in any branch of the Armed Forces of the United States. The bill requires that for purposes of the credits' availability the wages of a qualified veteran must be subject to the gross income tax and paid on or after January 1, 2018 but before January 1, 2022. To be creditable, wages must also arise from employment of a qualified veteran for at least 185 business days of the applicable tax year.

To qualify for a credit, the bill imposes a series of conditions on a taxpayer as an employer. For a tax year that the credit is claimed, the bill requires that 25 percent of the taxpayer's new employees be qualified veterans. For tax years immediately subsequent to a prior credit year, the bill further requires that 50 percent of the qualified veterans hired in that prior tax year must remain employed by the taxpayer.

In addition to employment criteria, the bill conditions credit qualification on other aspects of veteran employment. The bill requires a taxpayer to provide veteran support services that are accessible in the workplace. The bill further conditions credit qualification on a taxpayer's regular recruitment efforts to hire qualified veterans and their nuclear family members while providing support to outreach efforts of veteran support organizations. The bill also conditions credit qualification on compliance with the federal Uniformed Services Employment and Reemployment Rights Act and the provision of privileges in excess of the rights protected by that act.

In addition to providing the terms of credit qualification, the bill contains provisions aimed at preventing potential misuse of the credit. The bill prohibits taxpayers from simultaneously using the wages or employment of a qualified veteran to qualify for the credit and any other generally available employment incentive that comes in the form of a State tax credit or grant. The bill also empowers the Director of the Division of Taxation to recapture credit, plus an additional 50% penalty, if the Director determines that the employer displaced employees to replace them with qualified veterans for the primary purpose of taking advantage of the credit.

The credits established by this bill are limited in duration in that they are available for tax years commencing on or after January 1, 2018 but before January 1, 2022.

Recommend approval

**S3266** Exempts disabled veterans and Purple Heart recipients from payment of municipal parking meter fees when vehicle bears veteran's or recipient's special license plate or placard issued by MVC.

This matter was legislated in the last session. A2276/S172 Exempts disabled veterans and Purple Heart recipients from payment of Municipal Parking Meter Fees when their vehicles bear disabled veteran's or Purple Heart license plate or placard issued by N.J. Motor Vehicle Commission. Approved P.L.2015, c.218 1/19/2016.

**No need to pass this legislation again.**

