

Approved: 02/10/09

Date

MINUTES OF THE HOUSE VETERANS, MILITARY AND HOMELAND SECURITY COMMITTEE

The meeting was called to order by Chairman Don Myers at 1:30 p.m. on February 5, 2009, in Room 711 of the Docking State Office Building.

All members were present except:

Representative Clay Aurand- excused
Representative Pat George- excused

Committee staff present:

Art Griggs, Office of the Revisor of Statutes
Scott Wells, Office of the Revisor of Statutes
Corey Carnahan, Kansas Legislative Research Department
Chris Courtwright, Kansas Legislative Research Department
Barbara Lewerenz, Committee Assistant

Conferees appearing before the committee:

Wayne Bollig, Director of Veterans' Services, Kansas Commission on Veterans' Affairs (KCVA)

No written testimony:

Ken Stodgell, Legislative Chairman, Veterans of Foreign Wars

Others attending:

See attached list.

Moved by Representative Craft, seconded by Representative Seiwert for approval of minutes of the House Committee on Veterans, Military and Homeland Security, held February 3, 2009. Motion Carried.

Researcher Corey Carnahan summarized the changes made in **HB-2085 - An act relating to the veterans claims assistance program; service grant eligibility requirements.** Lines 29 and 20 of page 2 clarify that employees of the KCVA who work in veteran services programs must be veterans. Line 25 - 28 requires continuing education for all those who work in the program is necessary for grant eligibility. Wording changes on page 3 clarify the locations in Wichita, Leavenworth and Topeka where veterans affairs staff are located. **HB 2086 - An act relating to composition of the veterans claims assistance advisory board.** Change came about as there are only two service organizations participating in the program and originally it was assumed there would be three organizations participating.

The chairman opened the hearing on **HB 2085** and **HB 2086.**

Wayne Bollig, Director of Veterans' Services for KCVA spoke as a proponent of **HB-2085** and **HB 2086** (Attachment 1). Mr Bollig said both bills were supported by the KCVA, the Veterans' Claims Assistance Advisory Board and the participating veterans' service organizations. **HB 2085** contains technical changes that clarify current programs and allow KCVA to contract with trainers other than the National Association of County Veterans Service Officers (NACVSO).. **HB-2086** changes the number of advisory board members to reflect service organization participation. He clarified that certified training is provided based on national standards. Mr. Bollig also said that **HB-2085** clarifies that veterans affairs staff are located in the Federal Veterans Administration Regional Office in Wichita which is separate from the Veterans Administration Regional Medical Center in Wichita. The veterans affairs staff are located in the medical centers in Leavenworth and Topeka.

Chairman Myers called on Ken Stodgell, Legislative Chairman, Veterans of Foreign Wars, who spoke in favor of **HB-2085** and **HB 2086.** He said the VFW favors all proposed changes in both bills. (No written testimony).

The Chairman then closed the hearing.

Revisor Scott Wells explained the proposed Balloon Amendment to **HB 2085** to include **HB 2086.**

Moved by Representative Garcia, seconded by Representative Tafanelli to accept the Balloon Amendment. to **HB2085** to include **HB 2086.** Motion Carried.

CONTINUATION SHEET

Minutes of the House Veterans, Military And Homeland Security Committee at 1:30 p.m. on February 5, 2009, in Room 711 of the Docking State Office Building.

Chairman Myers appointed Representative Seiwert to carry the bill in the House.

Moved by Representative Hineman, seconded by Representative Meier to adopt **HB 2085** as Amended. Motion Carried.

The Chairman announced that **HCR 5009 - Concurrent resolution opposing relocation of Guantanamo Bay detainees to Kansas**, requested by Representatives Tapanelli, Meier and Crow was passed successfully as **SCR 1606 - Concurrent resolution opposing relocation of Guantanamo detainees to Kansas**.

The next meeting is February 10. There will be a hearing and possible work on **HB 2170 - Combat veteran and legion of merit decals for license plates**. The Agenda will be revised to include a hearing for any additional bills we are assigned.

Meeting adjourned at 2:10 p.m.

Purpose: Testimony

Presented to: **Veterans, Military and Homeland Security**

Date: February 05, 2008

Representatives, my name is Wayne Bollig, the Director of Veteran Services for the Kansas Commission on Veterans' Affairs. Thank you for the opportunity to provide this testimony to you regarding the Kansas Commission on Veterans' Affairs. HB-2085 is supported by the Kansas Commission on Veterans' Affairs, the Veterans Claims assistance Advisory Board and the participating veterans' service organizations. This bill contains technical changes that clarify the current programs. HB-2085 allows the KCVA to contract with other available trainers for annual training. Under the current statute if the NACVSO was not available we would be in technical violation of the statute this simply allows opportunities for us to seek other viable options for training.

HB-2086 is also supported by the Kansas Commission on Veterans' Affairs, the Veterans Claims assistance Advisory Board and the participating veterans' service organizations. This bill contains a technical change. It simply changes the number of advisory board members to reflect the program as it has been implemented. Since only two organizations have elected to participate in the program there are only two members by making this change representation on the advisory board will better reflect service organization participation.