

WISCONSIN STATE  
LEGISLATURE  
COMMITTEE HEARING  
RECORDS

1999-00

(session year)

Assembly

(Assembly, Senate or Joint)

Committee on  
Veterans and  
Military Affairs  
(AC-VMA)

Sample:

Record of Comm. Proceedings ... RCP

- 05hr\_AC-Ed\_RCP\_pt01a
- 05hr\_AC-Ed\_RCP\_pt01b
- 05hr\_AC-Ed\_RCP\_pt02

➤ Appointments ... Appt

➤ \*\*

➤ Clearinghouse Rules ... CRule

➤ \*\*

➤ Committee Hearings ... CH

➤ \*\*

➤ Committee Reports ... CR

➤ \*\*

➤ Executive Sessions ... ES

➤ \*\*

➤ Hearing Records ... HR

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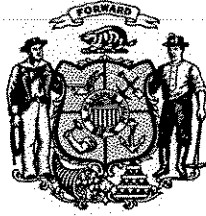
➤ Miscellaneous ... Misc

➤ **99hr\_AC-VMA\_Misc\_pt07**

➤ Record of Comm. Proceedings ... RCP

➤ \*\*

Budget Motions 99



David J. Stute  
Director

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April 27, 1999

TO: ASSEMBLY COMMITTEE ON VETERANS AND MILITARY AFFAIRS  
FROM: Pam Shannon, Senior Staff Attorney  
SUBJECT: Budget Recommendations to the Joint Committee on Finance

At the request of Chairperson Terry Musser, I have prepared the attached budget recommendation motions for the Committee's consideration at its April 28, 1999 executive session. At the end of each motion is a reference to the corresponding Legislative Reference Bureau (LRB) draft budget amendment which Chairperson Musser is having prepared. Because some of those amendments are still in drafting, they will be distributed separately. Since the Committee's recommendations to the Joint Committee on Finance are advisory in nature, the Committee will be asked to vote on the attached motions, rather than on the LRB amendments.

It should be noted that some of the motions propose to modify items contained in the Governor's budget bill, while other motions propose to insert agency budget request items that were *not* included in the Governor's budget bill. Where the motions modify existing budget bill items, a reference is provided to the description of those items in the Legislative Fiscal Bureau document: *1999-01 Wisconsin State Budget: Summary of Governor's Budget Recommendations* (March 1999).

Note also that Chairperson Musser's rationale for each proposed budget recommendation is set forth before the corresponding motion and that Motion 4 is being proposed by Representative Jean Hundertmark, Committee Vice Chairperson.

Please feel free to call me at 266-2680 if you have any questions about these motions.

PS:wu;ksm

Attachments

**Assembly Committee on Veterans and Military Affairs  
Budget Recommendation Motion**

**Representative Terry Musser**

**Motion 1**

*Relating to: Badger Challenge Program*

**Department of Military Affairs  
LFB Summary of Governor's Budget Recommendations, p. 339, item 6**

**Governor:** Shift funds for the Badger Challenge program from GPR to PR funding. A new PR appropriation would be created and the source of the PR funding would be the federal temporary assistance for needy families (TANF) program. Further, restrict eligibility for the Badger Challenge program to disadvantaged youth that are members of families who would be eligible to receive TANF funding. Federal law and regulations describe who may be eligible to receive TANF-funded benefits and services, and under what conditions. In general, in Wisconsin, TANF funds may be spent on families whose income is below 200% of the federal poverty level. In addition, TANF-eligible families generally must include a minor child or pregnant individual.

**Representative Musser:** Currently, the Badger Challenge program, operated at Fort McCoy, WI, is open to any 14-16 year old who is at risk of dropping out of school, regardless of family income. Historically, the cadets and their families have come from a wide-range of socio-economic backgrounds. This program has been very successful in helping at-risk youths change the direction of their lives, get their high-school diploma, GED, or HSED, and ultimately stay out of prison. In 1998-99, \$330,000 GPR was provided for the program.

The Department of Military Affairs' records of the cadets' health care coverage indicate that only 13% of youths that have participated in past Badger Challenge sessions would have met the TANF income requirement. The governor's changes, and TANF restrictions, would make this beneficial program unavailable to 87% of those currently eligible to participate.

**MOTION:** Recommend to Joint Committee on Finance that they delete the governor's changes and shift the funding source for the Badger Challenge program from TANF back to GPR, as in current law, and provide funds of \$332,700 GPR in 1999-00 and \$332,700 GPR in 2000-01, which are the same dollar amounts as are in the governor's budget bill. [LRBb0166/1]

*Musser*

**Assembly Committee on Veterans and Military Affairs  
Budget Recommendation Motion**

**Representative Terry Musser**

**Motion 2**

***Relating to: Badger Challenge Program***

**Department of Military Affairs**

**Governor:** No provision.

*6 weeks -*

**Representative Musser:** The Department of Military Affairs (DMA) budget request included one FTE position for a person to coordinate the mentoring portion of the Badger Challenge program, which was not included in the governor's budget bill. Mentoring cadets in their home communities for a full year following their participation in the Badger Challenge program is a key component of the program. Currently there is no one at the program's headquarters at Fort McCoy working full time to coordinate mentoring activities. The position authorization for a mentorship coordinator will greatly enhance the program's ability to provide those vital post-program services. In addition to coordinating the mentoring component, it is anticipated that the coordinator would also be involved in recruiting program participants.

**MOTION:** Recommend to Joint Committee on Finance that they increase the authorized FTE positions for the DMA by 1.0 GPR position to be funded from the appropriation under s. 20.465 (4) (b), Stats., for a mentorship coordinator in the Badger Challenge program. [LRBb0168/1]

*Contact once/week  
for 1 year*

**Assembly Committee on Veterans and Military Affairs  
Budget Recommendation Motion**

**Representative Terry Musser**

**Motion 3**

***Relating to: National Guard Tuition Grant Program***

**Department of Military Affairs**

**Governor:** No provision.

**Representative Musser:** The Department of Military Affairs (DMA) budget request included an additional \$35,600 GPR in 1999-00 and \$216,800 GPR in 2000-01 to meet an anticipated increase in the number of tuition grant applications and to reflect projected tuition increases. 1997 Wisconsin Act 27 increased the tuition reimbursement rate for guard members from 50% to 100% of tuition costs (not to exceed 100% of UW-Madison resident undergraduate tuition for a comparable academic load). The adjusted base funding level for the program is \$3,589,400 GPR. A total of 3,199 tuition grants were awarded during 1997-98. The DMA budget request anticipated participation will increase to 3,920 grant payments per year, which is consistent with levels experienced in 1993-94 when program participation peaked and grants had to be suspended due to lack of funds. The DMA budget request also assumed 5% annual increases in UW-Madison tuition. Subsequent to submitting its budget request, DMA re-estimated the amount needed to adequately fund the program, based on increased average grants awarded for the 1998-99 fall semester. (At the time the DMA submitted its original budget request, actual costs for the fall semester were not yet known.)

**MOTION:** Recommend to Joint Committee on Finance that they provide an additional \$103,300 GPR for 1999-00 and \$288,000 GPR for 2000-01 to fund the anticipated 5% annual increase in tuition costs and increased program participation.  
[LRBb0167/2]

**Assembly Committee on Veterans and Military Affairs  
Budget Recommendation Motion**

**Representative Jean Hundertmark**

**Motion 4**

*Relating to: Activities Staff Position and Overtime Pay at Veterans Home at King*

**Department of Veterans Affairs**

**LFB Summary of Governor's Budget Recommendations, p. 641, item 2**

**Governor:** Provide \$45,400 PR in 1999-00 and \$59,800 PR in 2000-01 to support 2.0 therapy assistant positions, beginning in 1999-00. These positions would increase the number of activities available for members at the King Home, especially those at lower functioning levels.

**Representative Hundertmark:** During the past two biennia, the Wisconsin Veterans Home at King has been consistently cited by the Bureau of Quality Assurance for not providing sufficient activities for the lower functioning residents at the Home. The Department of Veterans Affairs (DVA) had requested three additional activities staff positions in its biennial budget request. Only two activities staff positions were included in the governor's budget bill. If the Veterans Home is to fully meet its regulatory requirements for providing activities to residents, an additional 1.0 FTE activities staff position and associated funding is needed. In addition, the Veterans Home is required to meet state minimum staffing requirements on a 24-hour basis, 365 days a year. The problem is that the Home, like many other nursing care institutions in the state, has had problems filling vacant positions. As a result, the Home has had to work existing staff overtime in order to meet staffing minimums. Additional overtime funded is needed to offset the increase in overtime costs projected for the next biennium.

**MOTION:** Recommend to Joint Committee on Finance that they modify the governor's provision to provide an additional 1.0 FTE to DVA for the purpose of providing one additional activities staff position at the Wisconsin Veterans Home at King and \$398,700 PR in 1999-00 and \$435,900 PR in 2000-01 to fund the activities staff position and pay overtime costs necessary to meet minimum staffing requirements. [LRBb0149/4]

*Overtime = Cannot get Staff*

*temps -*

**Assembly Committee on Veterans and Military Affairs  
Budget Recommendation Motion**

**Representative Terry Musser**

**Motion 5**

***Relating to: Upgrading Veterans Benefits Delivery Systems***

*No Staff*

**Department of Veterans Affairs**

**LFB Summary of Governor's Budget Recommendations, p. 635, item 2**

**Governor:** Provide \$275,300 SEG and \$76,900 PR in 1999-00 and \$71,700 SEG and \$100,900 PR in 2000-01 to the Department of Veterans Affairs (DVA) for Information Technology (IT) migration plan implementation, in order to maintain and replace hardware and software and upgrade communications equipment at the DVA central office and at the Veterans Home at King.

**Representative Musser:** The governor's budget bill does *not* include several items relating to upgrading DVA's veterans benefits delivery systems that DVA had requested. Also, DVA requested a larger amount of funding for IT migration plan implementation than the amount included in the governor's budget bill. The items requested but not included in the bill, as well as the additional IT funds, were intended to ensure the long-term viability of the Veterans Trust Fund and the Mortgage Loan Repayment Fund.

The DVA has provided the following rationale for the various items:

- ***Veteran Survey:*** Conduct an annual survey of a random sample of Wisconsin veterans to identify their needs and issues and measure their satisfaction with current programs. This information will be used to develop and modify veterans benefits to better address their needs.
- ***Staff Training:*** Increase training resources to ensure DVA staff are adequately trained to use current IT technologies, employ effective management techniques and provide necessary customer service to veterans.
- ***Outreach Training and Information:*** Provide training and information to lenders, county veterans service officers and other service providers to ensure that those entities are aware of new programs and changes to existing programs so that they are able to best serve the needs of Wisconsin's veterans.
- ***Overtime Funding:*** There are peak demand periods for processing loan applications. The ability to process applications in a timely manner is critical to meeting veterans' financial needs. Failure to provide such service is likely to result in a significant decline in the revenues derived from the loan programs. The availability of overtime funding is needed in order to maintain quality service during peak load demands.
- ***Workstation Replacement:*** The standard workstations in the DVA are 10 years old and are not designed to effectively handle existing workflow



requirements, particularly the use of computers and other electronic equipment. Funding is needed to start a process of systematically replacing obsolete workstations at DVA.

- ***IT Migration Plan Implementation:*** The ability to implement new IT technologies is critical to the DVA's efforts to upgrade its benefits delivery systems. The DVA has started implementing an electronic application system that will greatly improve the delivery of veterans benefits. Implementation of the department's IT migration plan is critical to that system. These funds are needed to replace base level funding that was eliminated by the State Budget Office.

**MOTION:** Recommend to Joint Committee on Finance that they modify the governor's provision and provide funding and positions for the following purposes:

|   | <i>FY 1999-00</i>           | <i>FY 2000-01</i>           |
|---|-----------------------------|-----------------------------|
| Veterans Survey                                 | \$10,000 SEG                | \$10,000 SEG                |
| Staff Training                                  | \$31,400 SEG                | \$31,400 SEG                |
| Outreach Training and Information               | \$25,000 SEG                | \$25,000 SEG                |
| Fixed Asset Funding for Workstation Replacement | \$50,000 SEG                | \$50,000 SEG                |
| Overtime for Loan Processing                    | \$27,500 SEG                | \$28,400 SEG                |
| IT Migration Plan Implementation                | \$73,100 SEG<br>\$78,300 PR | \$73,100 SEG<br>\$78,300 PR |
| <b>TOTAL</b>                                    | <b>\$295,300</b>            | <b>\$296,200</b>            |

[LRBb0198/1]

**Assembly Committee on Veterans and Military Affairs  
Budget Recommendation Motion**

**Representative Terry Musser**

**Motion 6**

***Relating to: Operating the Northern Wisconsin Veterans Cemetery***

**Department of Veterans Affairs  
LFB Summary of Governor's Budget Recommendations, p. 640, item 13**

**Governor:** Provide funding of \$389,800 SEG in 1999-00 and \$18,200 FED, \$3,300 PR and \$253,500 SEG in 2000-01 to contract for the operation of the Northern Wisconsin Veterans Cemetery, to be located in the Town of Beaver Brook in Washburn County.

**Representative Musser:** In the 1997-99 biennial budget, the Legislature approved funding authority to construct a veterans cemetery in northern Wisconsin. The cemetery is scheduled to be operational in November of 2000. The Department of Veterans Affairs (DVA) biennial budget request would have provided the necessary funding and 4.0 FTE positions to operate the cemetery. The governor's biennial budget bill includes the required funding, but the requested position authority was denied on the basis that DVA should contract for the operation of the cemetery. At present, there are not any vendors on the state's procurement bulletins that contract for the operation of a cemetery. Therefore, it is not known whether there are vendors who would be able to provide such services in that part of the state. If there is not a vendor who could provide the quality of service required to operate a state veterans cemetery, DVA will not be able to open the cemetery as scheduled. Provision of the requested 4.0 FTE position authority is needed in order for the department to have the option to use state employees should it be necessary to do so. In 1995-96, the department surveyed 20+ state veteran cemeteries in other states. The types of services that these cemeteries contracted for included lawn fertilization, pest control, housekeeping and snow removal. None of the cemeteries surveyed contracted for the total operation of the facility.

**MOTION:** Recommend to Joint Committee on Finance that they modify the governor's provision to increase the authorized FTE positions for DVA by 4.0 SEG positions to be funded from the appropriation under s. 20.485 (4) (q), Stats., for the operation of the Northern Wisconsin Veterans Cemetery, so that DVA has the option, if needed, of using state employees to operate the cemetery. [LRBb0152/1]

**Assembly Committee on Veterans and Military Affairs  
Budget Recommendation Motion**

**Representative Terry Musser**

**Motion 7**

***Relating to: Funding Pay Increases Resulting From Staff Pay Survey***

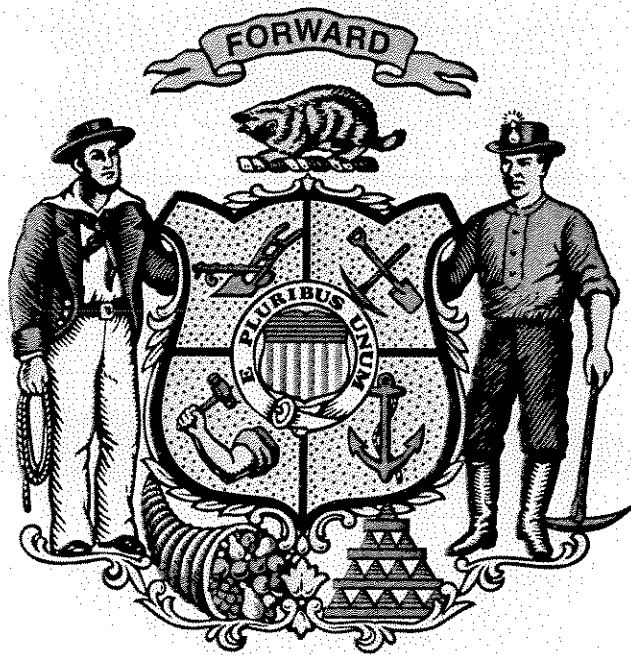
**Department of Veterans Affairs**

**Governor:** No provision.

**Representative Musser:** The Department of Veterans Affairs (DVA) has requested the Department of Employment Relations to do a survey of staff who either process veteran loan and grant applications or administer those programs. It is DVA's position that, compared to comparable positions in other agencies, those positions are under classified. It is likely that, as a result of the survey, most of the affected staff would receive pay increases. If that occurs, DVA could not absorb the increased salary costs within its current budget. DVA expects that this survey could be completed sometime at the end of the current fiscal year or early next fiscal year. This action is being undertaken to ensure that these employees are equitably compensated for the work they do. Additional salary and fringe benefit expenditure authority is needed in order to implement pay increases that result from the survey.

**MOTION:** Recommend to Joint Committee on Finance that they provide \$159,600 SEG in 1999-00 and \$164,400 SEG in 2000-01 to cover any DVA salary and fringe benefit costs resulting from the findings of the staff pay survey. Those funds are to be placed in the Joint Finance Committee's appropriation for unallotted reserves. Release of the funds will be under the 14-day passive review process. [LRBb0151/2]

*Staff - Only in  
Positions Vets Affairs*

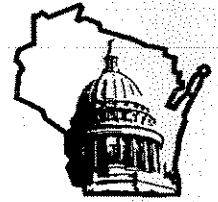


State Representative

**TERRY MUSSER**

92<sup>nd</sup> Assembly District

Chair, Assembly Committee on Veterans and Military Affairs



May 3, 1999

Representative John Gard, Cochairperson  
Joint Committee on Finance  
Room 315 North  
State Capitol  
Madison, WI 53701

**COPY  
FOR YOUR  
INFORMATION**

Senator Brian Burke, Cochairperson  
Joint Committee on Finance  
Room 316 South  
State Capitol  
Madison, WI 53701

Dear Representative Gard and Senator Burke:

I am writing to transmit to you and the members of the Joint Committee on Finance seven budget recommendation motions which were approved unanimously by the Assembly Committee on Veterans and Military Affairs on April 28, 1999.

The first three motions relate to two very important programs within the Department of Military Affairs: the Badger Challenge Program for at-risk youth and the National Guard Tuition Grant Program.

The other four motions relate to key activities of the Department of Veterans Affairs: the operation of the Veterans Home at King; the system of delivering veterans benefits; the operation of the Northern Wisconsin Veterans Cemetery; and the compensation of staff who process and administer veterans loans and grants.

An explanation of the rationale behind each recommendation is provided, along with the actual motion adopted by the Veterans and Military Affairs Committee. Attached to each motion is a corresponding LRB budget amendment draft which I have had prepared to facilitate your discussion of these recommendations.

I hope that the Joint Committee on Finance will give serious consideration to these recommendations, as they represent a truly bipartisan effort to address some concerns with the Governor's budget bill in the area of veterans and military affairs.

Madison Office: PO Box 8953, Madison, WI 53708 608-266-7461 Toll Free: 1-888-534-0092  
Fax: 608-282-3692 E-Mail: rep.musser@legis.state.wi.us

District Office: W13550 Murray Road, Black River Falls, WI 54615

608-488-2955

Representative Gard and Senator Burke  
May 3, 1999  
Page 2

Thank you very much for your assistance. Please feel free to contact me directly, or Pam Shannon of the Legislative Council Staff, if you have any questions about the Committee's recommendations.

Sincerely,



Representative Terry Musser, Chairperson  
Assembly Committee on Veterans and  
Military Affairs

TM:mr:wr

Enclosures

cc: Members, Joint Committee on Finance  
Members, Assembly Committee on Veterans and Military Affairs  
Adjutant General James G. Blaney, Department of Military Affairs  
Secretary Raymond G. Boland, Department of Veterans Affairs  
Robert William Lang, Legislative Fiscal Bureau  
David Worzala, Legislative Fiscal Bureau

April 28, 1999

**Assembly Committee on Veterans and Military Affairs  
Budget Recommendation Motion**

**Representative Jean Hundertmark**

**Motion 4**

*Relating to: Activities Staff Position and Overtime Pay at Veterans Home at King*

**Department of Veterans Affairs  
LFB Summary of Governor's Budget Recommendations, p. 641, item 2**

**Governor:** Provide \$45,400 PR in 1999-00 and \$59,800 PR in 2000-01 to support 2.0 therapy assistant positions, beginning in 1999-00. These positions would increase the number of activities available for members at the King Home, especially those at lower functioning levels.

**Representative Hundertmark:** During the past two biennia, the Wisconsin Veterans Home at King has been consistently cited by the Bureau of Quality Assurance for not providing sufficient activities for the lower functioning residents at the Home. The Department of Veterans Affairs (DVA) had requested three additional activities staff positions in its biennial budget request. Only two activities staff positions were included in the governor's budget bill. If the Veterans Home is to fully meet its regulatory requirements for providing activities to residents, an additional 1.0 FTE activities staff position and associated funding is needed. In addition, the Veterans Home is required to meet state minimum staffing requirements on a 24-hour basis, 365 days a year. The problem is that the Home, like many other nursing care institutions in the state, has had problems filling vacant positions. As a result, the Home has had to work existing staff overtime in order to meet staffing minimums. Additional overtime funded is needed to offset the increase in overtime costs projected for the next biennium.

**MOTION:** Recommend to Joint Committee on Finance that they modify the governor's provision to provide DVA with: (1) an additional 1.0 FTE for the purpose of providing one additional activities staff position at the Wisconsin Veterans Home at King and \$32,000 PR in 1999-00 and \$42,500 PR in 2000-01 to fund the activities staff position; and (2) \$366,700 PR in 1999-00 and \$393,400 PR in 2000-01 to pay overtime costs necessary to meet minimum staffing requirements at the Home. [LRBb0149/4]

Adopted 9-0

April 28, 1999

**Assembly Committee on Veterans and Military Affairs  
Budget Recommendation Motion**

**Representative Terry Musser**

**Motion 5**

*Relating to: Upgrading Veterans Benefits Delivery Systems*

**Department of Veterans Affairs**

**LFB Summary of Governor's Budget Recommendations, p. 635, item 2**

**Governor:** Provide \$275,300 SEG and \$76,900 PR in 1999-00 and \$71,700 SEG and \$100,900 PR in 2000-01 to the Department of Veterans Affairs (DVA) for Information Technology (IT) migration plan implementation, in order to maintain and replace hardware and software and upgrade communications equipment at the DVA central office and at the Veterans Home at King.

**Representative Musser:** The governor's budget bill does *not* include several items relating to upgrading DVA's veterans benefits delivery systems that DVA had requested. Also, DVA requested a larger amount of funding for IT migration plan implementation than the amount included in the governor's budget bill. The items requested but not included in the bill, as well as the additional IT funds, were intended to ensure the long-term viability of the Veterans Trust Fund and the Mortgage Loan Repayment Fund.

The DVA has provided the following rationale for the various items:

- ***Veteran Survey:*** Conduct an annual survey of a random sample of Wisconsin veterans to identify their needs and issues and measure their satisfaction with current programs. This information will be used to develop and modify veterans benefits to better address their needs.
- ***Staff Training:*** Increase training resources to ensure DVA staff are adequately trained to use current IT technologies, employ effective management techniques and provide necessary customer service to veterans.
- ***Outreach Training and Information:*** Provide training and information to lenders, county veterans service officers and other service providers to ensure that those entities are aware of new programs and changes to existing programs so that they are able to best serve the needs of Wisconsin's veterans.
- ***Overtime Funding:*** There are peak demand periods for processing loan applications. The ability to process applications in a timely manner is critical to meeting veterans' financial needs. Failure to provide such service is likely to result in a significant decline in the revenues derived from



the loan programs. The availability of overtime funding is needed in order to maintain quality service during peak load demands.

- **Workstation Replacement:** The standard workstations in the DVA are 10 years old and are not designed to effectively handle existing workflow requirements, particularly the use of computers and other electronic equipment. Funding is needed to start a process of systematically replacing obsolete workstations at DVA.
- **IT Migration Plan Implementation:** The ability to implement new IT technologies is critical to the DVA's efforts to upgrade its benefits delivery systems. The DVA has started implementing an electronic application system that will greatly improve the delivery of veterans benefits. Implementation of the department's IT migration plan is critical to that system. These funds are needed to replace base level funding that was eliminated by the State Budget Office.

**MOTION:** Recommend to Joint Committee on Finance that they modify the governor's provision to provide funding to DVA, *in addition to* the funding in the governor's provision, for the following purposes:

|   | <i>FY 1999-00</i>           | <i>FY 2000-01</i>           |
|---|-----------------------------|-----------------------------|
| Veterans Survey                                 | \$10,000 SEG                | \$10,000 SEG                |
| Staff Training                                  | \$31,400 SEG                | \$31,400 SEG                |
| Outreach Training and Information               | \$25,000 SEG                | \$25,000 SEG                |
| Fixed Asset Funding for Workstation Replacement | \$50,000 SEG                | \$50,000 SEG                |
| Overtime for Loan Processing                    | \$27,500 SEG                | \$28,400 SEG                |
| IT Migration Plan Implementation                | \$73,100 SEG<br>\$78,300 PR | \$73,100 SEG<br>\$78,300 PR |
| <b>TOTAL</b>                                    | <b>\$295,300</b>            | <b>\$296,200</b>            |

[LRBb0198/1]

Adopted 9-0

April 28, 1999

**Assembly Committee on Veterans and Military Affairs  
Budget Recommendation Motion**

**Representative Terry Musser**

**Motion 6**

*Relating to: Operating the Northern Wisconsin Veterans Cemetery*

**Department of Veterans Affairs**

**LFB Summary of Governor's Budget Recommendations, p. 640, item 13**

**Governor:** Provide funding of \$389,800 SEG in 1999-00 and \$18,200 FED, \$3,300 PR and \$253,500 SEG in 2000-01 to contract for the operation of the Northern Wisconsin Veterans Cemetery, to be located in the Town of Beaver Brook in Washburn County.

**Representative Musser:** In the 1997-99 biennial budget, the Legislature approved funding authority to construct a veterans cemetery in northern Wisconsin. The cemetery is scheduled to be operational in November of 2000. The Department of Veterans Affairs (DVA) biennial budget request would have provided the necessary funding and 4.0 FTE positions to operate the cemetery. The governor's biennial budget bill includes the required funding, but the requested position authority was denied on the basis that DVA should contract for the operation of the cemetery. At present, there are not any vendors on the state's procurement bulletins that contract for the operation of a cemetery. Therefore, it is not known whether there are vendors who would be able to provide such services in that part of the state. If there is not a vendor who could provide the quality of service required to operate a state veterans cemetery, DVA will not be able to open the cemetery as scheduled. Provision of the requested 4.0 FTE position authority is needed in order for the department to have the option to use state employees should it be necessary to do so. In 1995-96, the department surveyed 20+ state veteran cemeteries in other states. The types of services that these cemeteries contracted for included lawn fertilization, pest control, housekeeping and snow removal. None of the cemeteries surveyed contracted for the total operation of the facility.

**MOTION:** Recommend to Joint Committee on Finance that they modify the governor's provision to increase the authorized FTE positions for DVA by 4.0 SEG positions to be funded from the appropriation under s. 20.485 (4) (q), Stats., for the operation of the Northern Wisconsin Veterans Cemetery, so that DVA has the option, if needed, of using state employees to operate the cemetery. [LRBb0152/1]

Adopted 9-0

April 28, 1999

**Assembly Committee on Veterans and Military Affairs  
Budget Recommendation Motion**

**Representative Terry Musser**

**Motion 7**

*Relating to: Funding Pay Increases Resulting From Staff Pay Survey*

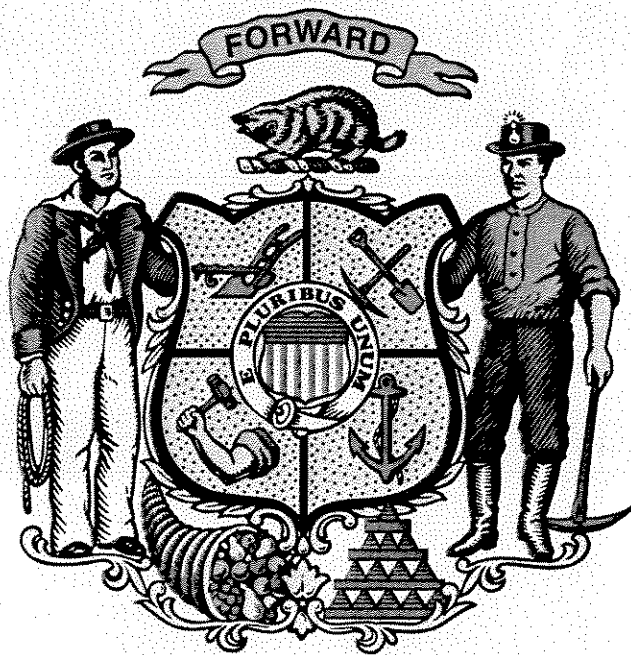
**Department of Veterans Affairs**

**Governor:** No provision.

**Representative Musser:** The Department of Veterans Affairs (DVA) has requested the Department of Employment Relations to do a survey of staff who either process veteran loan and grant applications or administer those programs. It is DVA's position that, compared to comparable positions in other agencies, those positions are under classified. It is likely that, as a result of the survey, most of the affected staff would receive pay increases. If that occurs, DVA could not absorb the increased salary costs within its current budget. DVA expects that this survey could be completed sometime at the end of the current fiscal year or early next fiscal year. This action is being undertaken to ensure that these employees are equitably compensated for the work they do. Additional salary and fringe benefit expenditure authority is needed in order to implement pay increases that result from the survey.

**MOTION:** Recommend to Joint Committee on Finance that they provide \$159,600 SEG in 1999-00 and \$164,400 SEG in 2000-01 to cover any DVA salary and fringe benefit costs resulting from the findings of the staff pay survey. Those funds are to be placed in the Joint Finance Committee's appropriation for unallotted reserves. Release of the funds will be under the 14-day passive review process. [LRBb0151/2]

Adopted 9-0





WISCONSIN STATE SENATE

**RODNEY C. MOEN**

SENATOR - 31ST DISTRICT

State Capitol, P.O. Box 7882, Madison, Wisconsin 53707-7882 Phone: (608) 266-8546 Toll-free Hotline: 1-800-362-9472

May 24, 1999

Senator Brian Burke, Co-Chair  
Representative John Gard, Co-Chair  
Joint Committee on Finance

COPY

Dear Co-Chair,

The following is a list of my budget recommendations regarding the Department of Veterans Affairs (DVA).

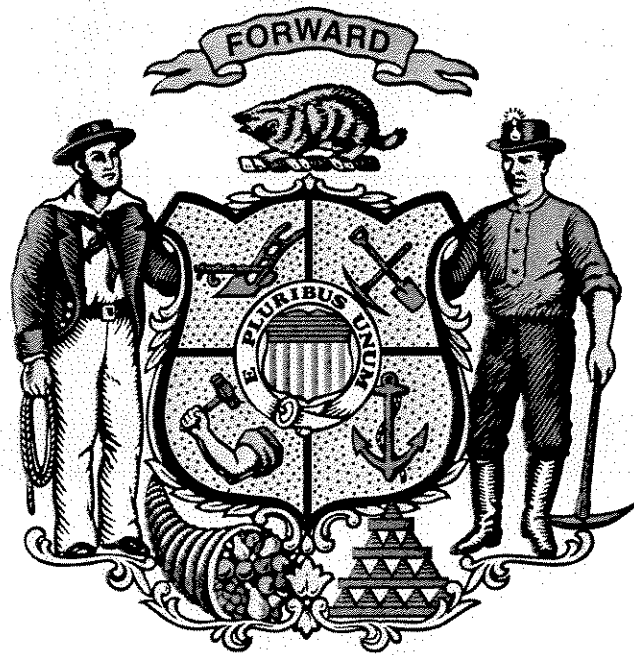
- The integrating of the Wisconsin National Guard Museum at Volk Field in the Veterans Museum in Madison should be paid for with General Purpose Revenue and not with Veterans Trust Fund dollars.
- The DVA should be given the option of hiring state employees to operate the new Northern Veterans Cemetery. The Governor's budget bill contains the necessary funding but position authority was not included.
- Effective July, 1, 2001, increase the rate of reimbursement for the Veterans Tuition Fee Reimbursement Grant Program to 75-percent. This would be in addition to the increase to 65-percent included in the Governor's budget bill for the next biennium.
- Increase program revenue funding for the Wisconsin Veterans Home in King for additional overtime costs and for one additional activities staff person.
- Exempt the Wisconsin Veterans Home at King and the veterans nursing care facility at the Southern Center from the statewide bed limit. This provision will allow the DVA to capture a significant amount of federal VA funds to help offset the cost to the state.

Thank you for your consideration of the above. Please feel free to contact me with any questions you may have.

Sincerely,

*Rod*

Rodney C. Moen, Chair  
Senate Committee on Health,  
Utilities, Veterans and Military  
Affairs.



# TERRY MUSSER

STATE REPRESENTATIVE

92<sup>ND</sup> ASSEMBLY DISTRICT

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May 1999

Representative John Gard, Co-Chair  
Joint Committee on Finance

Senator Brian Burke, Co-Chair  
Joint Committee on Finance

Dear Gentlemen:

I urge you to support the following recommendations, listed in priority order, on issues that impact the Department of Veterans Affairs in the State Budget.

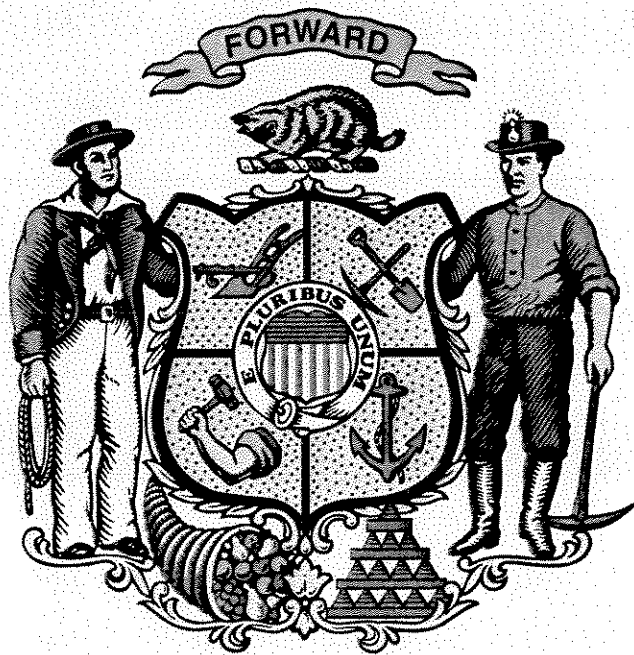
1. All new funding (Fiscal Bureau Summary, pages 638 - 639, items 9, 10 & 11) for the Veterans Museum, the proposed integration of the National Guard Museum into the Veterans Museum, and the designated funding for the Volk Field Museum **must not utilize any Veterans Trust Fund dollars**. The Governor and the Legislature previously established that state veterans and military museums would not be paid for by the Veterans Trust Fund because doing so would mean that veterans would be paying for the very museums created to honor their service and sacrifice. To begin using VTF funding again for these museums would be viewed by the veterans community as a breach of faith.
2. The Department of Veterans Affairs must be allowed the option of hiring state employees, if necessary, to operate the Northern Veterans Cemetery. The Governor's proposed state budget contains the necessary funding, but position authority was not included.
3. Approve an increase in the rate of the Veterans Tuition and Fee Reimbursement Grant Program to 75%, **effective July 1, 2001**. This should be in addition to the increase to 65% which is already included in the Governor's proposed state budget.
4. The Veterans Home at King must receive adequate funding for a total of three therapy assistant positions and sufficient funding for the necessary overtime. This will address the staffing shortages for which the Bureau of Quality Assurance has consistently cited the King Home. The Governor is proposing only two of these staff positions and without any overtime funding.
5. Exempt the Wisconsin Veterans Home at King and the veterans nursing care facility at the Southern Center from the statewide bed limit. This provision will allow DVA to capture a significant amount of federal VA funds to help offset state costs.

**PLEASE NOTE THAT RECOMMENDATIONS 2 - 5 DO NOT UTILIZE ANY GPR FUNDING.**

I personally assure you that all five of the above recommendations are in the best interests of all of our Veterans in Wisconsin. Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,

Terry Musser, Assembly Chair  
Veterans & Military Affairs Committee





**DRAFT**

Date: June 3, 1999 **For Discussion Purpose  
Only**

To: The Co-Chairs and Members of the Joint Committee on Finance

From: Marvin J. Freedman  
Executive Director  
Vietnam Veterans of America

Ken L. Kuehnl Jr.  
Legislative Director  
Disabled Veterans of America

James W. Hannah  
President, County Veterans  
Service Officers Association  
of Wisconsin

Michael Furgal  
State Commander  
Veterans of Foreign Wars

Re: 1999-2000 FY Veterans Affairs-Related Budget Recommendations

On behalf of the almost 500,000 Wisconsin veterans our organizations serve and/or represent, we urge you to address the following veterans affairs issues, in the manner described below, when considering the 1999-2000 FY budget:

**⓪Veterans Museum Funding:** All new funding [LFB 1999-01 Budget Summary: Page 638-639, #9, 10, & 11] for the Wisconsin Veterans Museum, the proposed integrated National Guard museum and the Volk Field museum must be GPR, not VTF SEG. Utilizing VTF resources would, in effect, require veterans generated dollars to fund the museums established to memorialize and commemorate Wisconsin veterans' service and sacrifice. The Governor and Legislature recognized this fact in the 1995-1997 budget by shifting all Veterans Museum funding from VTF to GPR. Failure to maintain that precedent would be a slap in the faces of Wisconsin veterans and viewed as a breach of trust by state government.

**RECOMMENDATION:** Adopt Alternative 2, Paper #1013 and approve all funding for LFB 1999-2001 Budget Summary: Page 639, #10 & 11 utilizing GPR funds only.

**⓪Northern Wisconsin Veterans Cemetery:** Contracting out overall operations would not be the most effective and efficient use of VTF SEG monies. WDVA should be allowed to determine whether various operational activities should be administered directly by WDVA or contracted out to maximize cost efficiencies.

**RECOMMENDATION:** Authorize the four [4] WDVA-requested FTE positions so the department has the option, if needed, to use state employees to most properly operate the cemetery. The Governor's budget proposal already includes the required SEG funding, although position authority was not.

**⓪Veterans Tuition & Fee Reimbursement and Part-Time Study Grant Programs:**

The proposed increase from 50% to 65% must be supported to ensure the continuation of the veterans community's and the Legislative Council's approved phase-in of coverage to equal the 100% tuition reimbursement rate for members of the National Guard. Parity is essential to treat veterans in a fair and equitable manner and to properly recognize their relative service & sacrifice during their tenures on active military duty.

**RECOMMENDATION:** Adopt Alternatives A. 2. And B. 1., Paper #1027; and also approve additional VTF SEG funding to increase the TFRG reimbursement rate from 65% to 75%, effective July 1, 2001.

**WISCONSIN VETERANS HOME AT KING FTE POSITIONS:** Although WDVA requested three therapy assistant positions and an essential overtime appropriation to provide sufficient activities for lower functioning residents and to meet the standards of the Bureau of Quality Assurance, only two of the positions were included in the Governor's budget proposal. All three positions are a necessity to provide the required level of adequate care. The Governor did not recommend any overtime funding.

**RECOMMENDATION:** One additional FTE therapy assistant non-GPR position must be added and the originally requested non-GPR overtime appropriation must be approved to ensure that minimum staffing requirements are met at King so King is brought within the minimum compliance standards of the Bureau of Quality Assurance.

**EXEMPTION OF BED CAPS FOR KING AND SOUTHERN CENTER:** For WDVA to capture a significant amount of federal VA funds to help offset state costs, it is very important to exempt the Wisconsin Veterans Home at King and the veterans nursing care facility at Southern Center from the statewide bed limit.

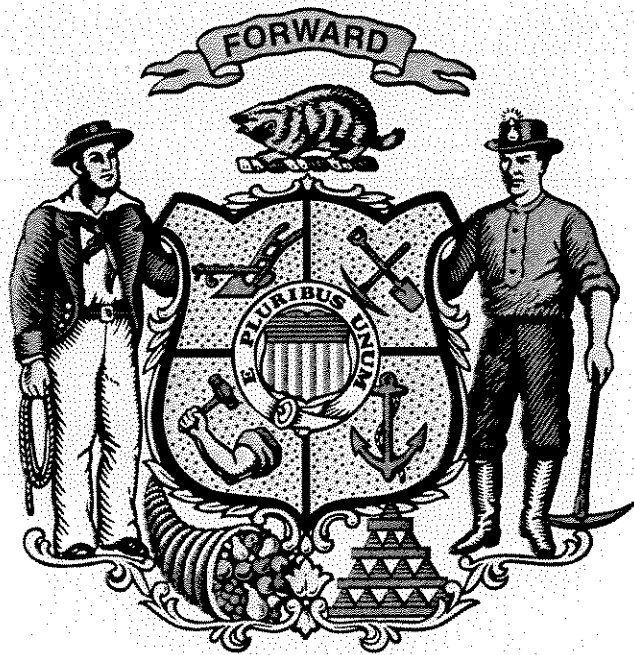
**RECOMMENDATION:** Add a provision to exempt King and Southern Center from the state's bed cap limit.

**PLEASE NOTE:**

1. **RECOMMENDATIONS 2 THROUGH 4 DO NOT UTILIZE ANY GPR FUNDING.**
2. **THE ABOVE RECOMMENDATIONS ARE SUPPORTED BY THE CHAIRS OF THE SENATE AND ASSEMBLY COMMITTEES ON VETERANS & MILITARY AFFAIRS, AS WELL AS THE WISCONSIN DEPARTMENT OF VETERANS AFFAIRS.**

Thank you very much for your consideration of our recommendations.

**DRAFT**  
**For Discussion Purposes**  
**Only**





Tommy G. Thompson, Governor  
Raymond G. Boland, Secretary

**STATE OF WISCONSIN, DEPARTMENT OF VETERANS AFFAIRS**

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October 8, 1999

Dear Representative Terry Musser :

The following WDVA initiatives were included in the biennial budget, which was passed by the State Senate and Assembly. Thank you for your support during the entire budget process.

- **Increase reimbursement for education grant programs**

The reimbursement rate for the Part-Time Study Grant and Tuition and Fee Reimbursement Grant programs was increased to 65 percent. The previous reimbursement rate was 50 percent. The reimbursement increase can be absorbed within the existing budgets for both grant programs.

- **Provide Tuition and Fee Reimbursement Grants to veterans attending private schools**

Under previous state statutes, veterans attending qualified private schools in Wisconsin were eligible for Part-Time Study Grants but not Tuition and Fee Reimbursement Grants. Now private schools in Wisconsin that meet the requirements for Part Time Study Grants also meet the requirements for Tuition and Fee Reimbursement Grants.

- **Modify state residency requirement**

Those veterans who were not Wisconsin residents at the time they entered active-duty military service must have lived in Wisconsin for five consecutive years any time after discharge from active duty in order to be eligible for state veterans' benefits. The budget modifies the state residency requirement so that active-duty service in Wisconsin may count toward the five consecutive years of residency.

- **Increase maximum amount for Home Improvement Loan Program (HILP)**

The maximum amount a veteran may borrow with a WDVA Home Improvement Loan (HILP) was increased to \$25,000 with 15 years to repay. The previous maximum was \$15,000.

- **Increase funding for Health Care Aid Grant**

WDVA's spending authority for the Health Care Aid Grant (HCAG) program was increased by \$284,300 in each fiscal year. Combined with previous funding levels, the increase will allow HCAG total expenditures of up to \$1.2 million per fiscal year. Recent changes in Administrative Rules permit WDVA to use up to 25 percent of the total HCAG annual budget to fund grants for dentures. With \$1.2 million in funding per fiscal year, WDVA may now provide a total of \$300,000 in grants for dentures.

- **Increase funding for Veterans Assistance Program (VAP)**

To help homeless veterans and those at-risk of becoming homeless, the Veterans Assistance Program's budget was increased to \$686,500 in fiscal year 1999-2000 and \$765,200 in 2000-2001. The funding will provide on-going support for the new assistance center at Southern Wisconsin Center, near Union Grove, as well as the existing centers at Tomah/Fort McCoy, King and Milwaukee. Of the total budget amount, the federal government will provide \$304,900 in fiscal year 1999-2000 and \$295,000 in fiscal year 2000-2001. In addition, it is estimated that program revenue will generate \$80,000 annually.

- **Fully implement the Veterans Employment and Training Program**

The WDVA has spending authority of \$158,200 in fiscal year 1999-2000 and \$60,000 in fiscal year 2000-2001 to implement fully the employment and training program approved in the last biennial budget. This includes a one-time expenditure of approximately \$156,000 for the research, design and development of an Internet-based service that will help veterans interested in teaching jobs get academic credit for military experience.

- **Fund operating expenses for the new cemetery in northern Wisconsin**

The WDVA's spending authority is \$389,800 in fiscal year 1999-2000 and \$275,000 in fiscal year 2000-2001 to operate a new state veterans cemetery, which will be built near Spooner. All of the expenditure authority in the first fiscal year will be used to purchase equipment for the cemetery. Subsequent funding will provide four full-time equivalent positions to operate the cemetery when it opens in 2000.

- **Assume operation of the Wisconsin National Guard Museum**

To assume the operation of the Wisconsin National Guard Museum at Volk Field, the WDVA has received general purpose revenue funding (state tax dollars) of \$382,000 in fiscal year 1999-2000 and \$287,300 in fiscal year 2000-2001 to pay for 3.5 full-time positions and to create and operate a new library that includes the archives, manuscripts and photographic collections of the Wisconsin National Guard. The new library will be located on the third floor of 30 West Mifflin Street and operated by the Wisconsin Veterans Museum. The new library will also contain the veterans museum's book collection currently located in the basement of the building.

- **Increase funding for Wisconsin Veterans Museum advertising and educational events**

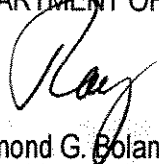
The WDVA received \$10,000 of spending authority from the Veterans Trust Fund in each fiscal year for expansion of the museum's advertising in tourism publications, a banner display on the outside of the building and publication of educational materials for students.

- **Improve the provision of benefits to Native American veterans**

The WDVA's spending authority is \$85,500 in fiscal year 1999-2000 and \$79,400 in fiscal year 2000-2001 to improve the provision of benefits to Native American veterans living on tribal lands in Wisconsin. The funding will finance a new full-time position for coordinating the policy and planning development of programs for Native American veterans. The WDVA also will fund grants that will be used by Wisconsin tribes to improve the provision of veterans' benefits. Funding for the grants and tribal coordinator position is part of the Governor's Native American Gaming Initiative.

If you have any questions, please call John Scocos, WDVA Executive Assistant, at 608-266-3081.

Sincerely,  
DEPARTMENT OF VETERANS AFFAIRS

  
Raymond G. Boland  
Secretary