

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

➤ **99hr\_ab0674\_AC-VMA\_pt01**

➤ Miscellaneous ... Misc

➤ \*\*

➤ Record of Comm. Proceedings ... RCP

➤ \*\*



**March 30, 2000**

### **BACKGROUND**

The Wisconsin Department of Veterans Affairs (WDVA) currently operates a Veterans Home at King Wisconsin. Under current law they also have statutory authority to construct and operate a residential, treatment and nursing care facility in southeastern Wisconsin, near Union Grove. The WDVA currently collects their own delinquent loan payments. The residents of the King Veterans Home are entitled to a free fishing license. Under current law, a veteran may receive a grant of up to \$3,000 for retraining to enable the veteran to obtain employment. To receive the grant, the veteran must be enrolled in a training course at a technical college or in an on-the-job training program that meets program requirements by the Wisconsin Department of Veterans Affairs (DVA). Income limits currently exist for veterans housing loans. The Department currently uses funds to defray the costs of the annual convention and publications of the Veterans of World War I.

### **SUMMARY OF AB 674**

Assembly Bill 674 implements authority to treat the residents of the new facility as they are treated at the King Home. Members will be considered residents of the respective town and county, federal per diem funds can be utilized for both facilities and the member funds apply to both facilities. The residents at the southeastern facility will receive an annual fishing license at no charge. Membership and eligibility will be identical to the criteria for the King Home except that residents at the new facility must have sufficient income to pay for the cost at the facility. AB 674 authorizes the department to enter into contracts with a vendor to collect delinquent loan payments and to release confidential information on the veteran to the contractors. This change will also ensure authority to prevent any legal challenges. This bill adds proprietary schools, privately owned which do not offer a 4-year degree, to the types of schools for which veterans can receive training funds under the Retraining Grant Program. The income limitations on housing loans are removed with this bill. Standard industry underwriting criteria will be used to determine the amount of the housing loan a veteran may receive subject to the maximum loan permitted by statute. Funds used for the World War I Veterans will be used by the Veterans Museum to provide exhibits and educational materials relating to World War I Veterans.

### **AMENDMENTS**

**Assembly Amendment 1** to Assembly Bill 674 deletes language that was signed into law in the State Budget, 1999 WI Act 9. [adopted 9-0-0]. **Assembly Amendment 2** extends the deadline for the WDVA to collect contributions for the WWII Memorial. [adopted 9-0-0].

### **FISCAL EFFECT**

A fiscal estimate prepared by the WI Department of Health & Family Services, states that the Department can conduct the licensing and federal certification, review the building plans and conduct inspections with existing staff. Some of the residents of the southeastern facility will be eligible for Medicaid and although these costs will likely increase, it is not possible for DHFS to estimate the costs at this time. A fiscal estimate prepared by the WDVA estimates that an additional 30 retraining grants will be applied for resulting in \$90,000 cost to the Veterans Trust Fund (SEG). There is no fiscal impact on the Department for the other provisions in the bill. The Department of Natural Resources estimates that if 30% of the 122 residents at the facility request a free \$13.25 fishing license, the conservation segregated revenue would be reduced by \$477.00 annually.

### **PROS**

1. The veteran residents of the new southeastern facility should be treated and provided for in the same manner as the veterans are at the King Home.
2. Allowing veterans to use the Retraining Grant in private "technical" schools will allow greater access for veterans as well as benefiting our private schools.
3. Using industry standards for income limits for the home loan program will create equality.

### **CONS**

None apparent.

### **SUPPORTERS**

Rep. Terry Musser, author; Sen. Rod Moen, co-author; John Scocos, Wisconsin Department of Veterans Affairs and Marv Freedman, Vietnam Veterans of America.

### **OPPOSITION**

No one testified or registered in opposition to the bill.

### **HISTORY**

Assembly Bill 674 was introduced on January 25, 2000, and referred to the Assembly Committee on Veterans & Military Affairs. A public hearing was held on February 16, 2000. On February 16, 2000, the Committee voted 9-0-0 to recommend passage of AB 674 as amended.

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