



Legislative Fiscal Bureau

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Joint Committee on Finance

Paper #807

Veterans Service Organization Grant Increases (Veterans Affairs -- General Agency Provisions)

[LFB 2003-05 Budget Summary: Page 459, #8]

CURRENT LAW

The Department of Veterans Affairs (DVA) must provide grants to a veterans service organization if the group has maintained a full-time Wisconsin service office at its regional office for at least five of the last ten years. The grants equal 25% of all salaries and travel expenses of the organization, subject to an overall annual grant maximum of \$30,000. Current base level funding for the grant program is \$105,000 SEG annually and provides annual grants to four veterans service organizations: the American Legion (\$30,000 SEG annually), Veterans of Foreign Wars (\$30,000 SEG annually), Disabled American Veterans (\$30,000 SEG annually), and AMVETS (\$15,000 SEG annually).

GOVERNOR

Provide \$75,000 SEG annually to fund new or increased grant amounts to qualifying veterans service organizations. Provide new annual grants of \$30,000 SEG each to the Military Order of the Purple Heart and to the Paralyzed Veterans of America, respectively. Provide an additional \$15,000 SEG annually to increase from \$15,000 SEG to \$30,000 SEG the current annual grant awarded to AMVETS.

DISCUSSION POINTS

1. The \$15,000 SEG annual grant increase recommended for AMVETS was based on the expectation that the organization would provide an additional Wisconsin services coordinator at the organization's regional office.

2. Currently, the organization's existing Wisconsin services coordinator position is vacant, and DVA has indicated that the organization may not immediately restore that position. Further, the Department does not now anticipate that AMVETS will hire the second Wisconsin coordinator position.

3. AMVETS will continue to qualify for its base level annual veterans service organization grant funding of \$15,000 SEG annually because it has maintained a full-time Wisconsin service office at its regional office for five of the last ten years. However, because the organization will not be adding a second Wisconsin coordinator position with the associated reimbursable expenses, the need no longer exists for the \$15,000 SEG annual grant payment increase originally recommended for this purpose.

4. Therefore, the Committee may wish to reduce the Governor's recommendation by \$15,000 SEG annually to reflect these changed circumstances.

ALTERNATIVES

1. Approve the Governor's recommendation to provide \$75,000 SEG annually to fund new or increased grant amounts to qualifying veterans service organizations.

2. Modify the Governor's recommendation by deleting \$15,000 SEG annually for an increased grant for AMVETS.

Alternative 2	SEG
2003-05 FUNDING (Change to Bill)	- \$30,000

3. Delete provision.

Alternative 3	SEG
2003-05 FUNDING (Change to Bill)	- \$150,000

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