

VETERANS AFFAIRS

VETERANS AFFAIRS OMNIBUS MOTION

Motion:

Move to incorporate the following items into the substitute amendment.

1. *Veterans Outreach and Recovery Program (LFB Summary, Page 616, #3, LFB Paper 650)*. Adopt Alternative A1 in LFB Paper #650, which would: (a) transfer \$548,600 SEG annually and 5.0 SEG positions, beginning in 2021-22, from the DVA appropriation for the administration of loans and aids and \$141,200 SEG annually and 1.75 SEG positions, beginning in 2021-22, from the appropriation for the veterans assistance program, to the VORP appropriation (\$689,800 SEG annually and 6.75 SEG positions, beginning in 2021-22) to consolidate funding for the VORP program in one DVA appropriation; and (b) reduce funding by \$549,700 SEG in 2021-22 and \$666,300 SEG in 2022-23 for the veterans tuition reimbursement program and reduce funding by \$150,000 SEG annually for the assistance to needy veterans program to reflect the administration's estimate of the amount needed to fully fund benefits and services supported by these appropriations.

Adopt Alternative C1 in LFB Paper #650, which would provide \$100,000 SEG annually to fund suicide prevention and awareness activities and require DVA to expend at least \$100,000 annually under VORP to promote suicide prevention and awareness by providing outreach, mental health services, and support to individuals who are members of traditionally underserved population, including minority groups and individuals who reside in rural areas of the state. Increase funding in the appropriation for making a transfer from the general fund to the veterans trust fund by \$100,000 GPR annually to reflect the additional amount of the transfer needed to support additional expenditures for suicide prevention and awareness activities.

2. *Veterans Service Office Grants (LFB Summary, Page 617, #4)*. Provide \$76,200 SEG annually to increase, from \$761,000 to \$837,200, annual funding for DVA to award as grants to support county veterans service officers (CVOs). Increase the appropriation for making a transfer from the general fund to the veterans trust fund by \$76,200 GPR annually to provide additional veterans trust fund revenues necessary to support the additional expenditures for CVSO grants.

Increase the statutory annual grant amounts as follows: (a) for counties with a population of less than 20,000, from \$8,500 to \$9,350; (b) for counties with a population of 20,000 to 45,499, from \$10,000 to \$11,000; (c) for a county with a population of 45,500 to 74,999, from \$11,500 to \$12,650; and (d) for a county with a population of 75,000 or more, from \$13,000 to \$14,300. Increase from \$500 to \$550 the maximum annual grant amount DVA pays to eligible counties with a part-time CVO.

Increase from \$15,000 to \$16,500 the maximum annual grant amount DVA pays to eligible governing bodies of federally-recognized American Indian tribes and bands that employ tribal veteran's service officers (TVSOs) that provide veterans services to tribal members. Maintain base funding for these grants (\$61,200 PR from Indian gaming revenue and \$48,800 SEG annually).

3. *Chippewa Falls State Veterans Home Operations (LFB Summary, Page 617, #6).* Provide \$400,000 PR annually to fund increases in the cost of the Department's contract with Health Dimensions Group to operate the Wisconsin Veterans Home at Chippewa Falls.

4. *Veterans Home at King -- Transfer Base Funding to Unallotted Reserve (LFB Summary, Page 618, #7).* Transfer \$10,000,000 PR annually in base funding budgeted for permanent position salaries (\$5,000,000), fringe benefits (\$2,510,500) and supplies and services (\$2,489,500) for the Veterans Home at King to unallotted reserve to reflect anticipated reductions in costs due to declining resident populations.

5. *Union Grove Assisted Living Facility Budget Authority and Positions (LFB Summary, Page 618, #8).* Reduce funding by \$2,921,300 PR annually and delete 26.93 PR positions, beginning in 2021-22, to eliminate funding and position authority for the assisted living facility at the Union Grove state veterans home, which closed in 2019-20.

6. *Cemetery Staffing Consolidation (LFB Summary, Page 618, #10).* Transfer \$355,500 SEG and 2.0 SEG positions that currently assist in the administration of the veterans memorial cemeteries but are funded from an appropriation that supports the administration of loans and aids, to a current appropriation that funds the administration and operation of the cemeteries, beginning in 2021-22.

7. *Veterans Service Organizations Grants.* Increase the maximum grant amount DVA may award to an organization under the veterans service organization (VSO) grant program, from \$100,000 annually to \$175,000 annually. Specify that this statutory change would first apply to applications for a grant assistance received by the Department of Veterans Affairs after July 1, 2021.

Increase the sum sufficient GPR appropriation that transfers funding from the general fund to the veterans trust fund by \$100,000 GPR annually to reflect the estimated additional SEG spending that would result by increasing to the maximum grant amount.

8. *Grant for an Organization Promoting U.S.S. Wisconsin.* Authorize DVA to award a onetime grant in 2021-22 from the GPR appropriation for Wisconsin Veterans Museum operations in an amount not to exceed \$16,540 to a private nonprofit organization or a nonstock corporation that is a nonprofit corporation whose sole purpose is to promote and support recognition of the Columbia-class submarine U.S.S. Wisconsin.

9. *State Veterans Homes Appropriation for Natural Disaster or Public Emergency Mitigation.* Provide \$10,000,000 PR in 2021-22 in a new, continuing appropriation for costs incurred by the state veterans homes to defray expenditures incurred in response to or in preparation for a natural disaster or a public emergency. Specify that the Department may credit moneys from the appropriation account of state veterans homes institutional operations as needed to meet expenditure obligations. Specify that, before making expenditures from this appropriation, the Department must

exhaust all funds allocated by the federal government to respond to the natural disaster or public emergency.

Note:

This motion would incorporate several of the administration's budget recommendations into the bill (Items 1 (part) and Items 3 through 6), would modify one recommendation (Item 2), and would add three new items relating to the veterans service organizations grant program (Items 7 through 9), as described below.

Veterans Service Office Grants. Under the VSO program, DVA distributes grants to certain organizations that provide claims service to Wisconsin veterans at the U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs Regional Benefit Office in the Milwaukee. Under current law, the maximum amount any organization can receive per year is \$100,000 or 50% of its costs for salary and transportation, whichever is greater. Grants are made from a veterans trust fund appropriation, with base funding of \$348,000 SEG annually. In 2019-20, two organizations received grants totaling \$192,900.

The motion would increase the maximum annual grant for an organization from \$100,000 to \$175,000. No change would be made to the SEG appropriation, since it currently exceeds the amount of anticipated additional grants that would be made.

U.S.S. Wisconsin Promotion Grant. The base budget for the Wisconsin Veterans Museum is \$3,618,400, funded with a SEG appropriation of \$3,369,900 and a GPR appropriation of \$248,500. The motion would authorize DVA to award a grant from the GPR appropriation for an organization to promote the Columbia-class submarine U.S.S. Wisconsin.

State Veterans Home Appropriation for Natural Disaster or Public Emergency Mitigation. DVA operates three state veterans homes--King, Chippewa Falls, and Union Grove. The operational costs for the homes are funded from revenues collected from resident payments, federal per diem and service-connected disability payments, medical assistance, and Medicare. Total base funding for the three veterans homes is \$117,790,800. This motion would provide \$10,000,000 in 2021-22 in a new, continuing PR appropriation, to provide DVA with budget authority to respond to natural disasters and public emergencies. Revenues would be transferred from the existing appropriation for state veterans home operations, as needed to meet expenditure obligations.

[Change to Base: \$7,231,400 (\$276,200 GPR \$7,478,700 PR, and -\$523,500 SEG) in 2021-22 and -\$2,885,200 (\$276,200 GPR, -\$2,521,300 PR and -\$640,100 SEG) in 2022-23 and -26.93 PR positions, beginning in 2021-22]

Fiscal Effect of Motion

<u>Item</u>	<u>Title</u>	<u>GPR</u>	<u>PR</u>	<u>SEG</u>	<u>Total</u>
2021-22					
1	Veterans Outreach and Recovery	\$100,000	\$0	-\$599,700	-\$499,700
2	Veterans Service Office Grants	76,200	0	76,200	152,400
3	Chippewa Falls Veterans Home	0	400,000	0	400,000
4	King Veterans Home -- Unallotted Reserve	0	0	0	0
5	Union Grove Assisted Living Facility	0	-2,921,300	0	-2,921,300
6	Cemetery Staffing Consolidation	0	0	0	0
7	Veterans Service Organizations Grants	100,000	0	0	100,000
8	U.S.S. Wisconsin Promotion Grant	0	0	0	0
9	State Veterans Home Appropriation	<u>0</u>	<u>10,000,000</u>	<u>0</u>	<u>10,000,000</u>
	Total Funding	\$276,200	\$7,478,700	-\$523,500	\$7,231,400

Positions

5	Union Grove Assisted Living Facility		-26.93		-26.93
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2022-23

1	Veterans Outreach and Recovery	\$100,000	\$0	-\$716,300	-\$616,300
2	Veterans Service Office Grants	76,200	0	76,200	152,400
3	Chippewa Falls Veterans Home	0	400,000	0	400,000
4	King Veterans Home -- Unallotted Reserve	0	0	0	0
5	Union Grove Assisted Living Facility	0	-2,921,300	0	-2,921,300
6	Cemetery Staffing Consolidation	0	0	0	0
7	Veterans Service Organizations Grants	100,000	0	0	100,000
8	U.S.S. Wisconsin Promotion Grant	0	0	0	0
9	State Veterans Home Appropriation	<u>0</u>	<u>0</u>	<u>0</u>	<u>0</u>
	Total Funding	\$276,200	-\$2,521,300	-\$640,100	-\$2,885,200

Positions

5	Union Grove Assisted Living Facility		-26.93		-26.93
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