

Assembly Committee on Veterans Affairs

2021-22

LEGISLATIVE SUMMARY



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Assembly Committee on Veterans Affairs 2021-2022 Legislative Summary

BILLS SENT TO GOVERNOR AND ENACTED RESOLUTIONS:

ASSEMBLY BILLS

AB 107 (Salas)

Chapter 693, Statutes of 2021

Licensure: veterans and military spouses.

Expands to all Department of Consumer Affairs (DCA) licensing boards the requirement that specified boards issue temporary licenses to the spouses of active-duty members of the United States Armed Forces, as specified, requires the DCA and the Department of Real Estate to compile information on military, veteran, and spouse licensure into an annual report for the Legislature, and for the DCA to post the information on its website.

AB 305 (Maienschein)

Chapter 376, Statutes of 2022

Veteran services: notice.

Requires specified government agencies to include, at their next scheduled update, additional questions on their intake and application forms to determine whether a person is affiliated with the Armed Forces of the United States.

AB 325 (Irwin)

Chapter 377, Statutes of 2022

Veterans: discharge upgrades.

Requires the California Department of Veterans Affairs to create a grant program to fund service providers working with California veterans to assist in obtaining upgrades of the character of their discharges, upon appropriation by the legislature.

AB 1002 (Choi)

Chapter 567, Statutes of 2021

Postsecondary education: course credit for prior military education, training, and service.

Requires the Office of the Chancellor of the California State University and requests the Office of the President of the University of California to develop, by September 1, 2022, a consistent policy to award military personnel and veterans course credit.

AB 1352 (Chau)

Chapter 593, Statutes of 2021

Independent information security assessments: Military Department: local educational agencies.

Authorizes the California Military Department (CMD) to perform an independent security assessment of a local educational agency or schoolsite, at the request and expense of the local educational agency.

AB 1595 (Quirk-Silva)**Chapter 579, Statutes of 2022.***Veterans cemetery: County of Orange.*

Authorizes, upon completion of an acquisition study by the California Department of Veterans Affairs (CalVet), any site within the County of Orange to be eligible for construction of a state-owned and operated Southern California Veterans Cemetery, and creates a fund for the purpose of receiving donations from non-state parties in order to pay for the costs of conducting site selection studies, under specified requirements, pursuant to the cemetery project, and declares an urgency.

AB 1633 (Seyarto)**Chapter 174, Statutes of 2022***Public postsecondary education: veterans' educational benefits: information sharing.*

Requires the California State University (CSU), and requests the University of California (UC), to electronically transmit specified personal information regarding students whose tuition or fees are paid, or intended to be paid, using GI Bill educational benefits to the Department of Veterans Affairs (CalVet).

AB 1692 (Voepel)**Vetoed.***Veterans: mental health.*

Would have required the California Department of Veterans Affairs (CalVet) to establish a program to fund, upon appropriation by the Legislature, an academic study of mental health among women veterans in California, and to submit a report to the Legislature no later than July 31, 2024.

AB 1715 (Muratsuchi)**Chapter 379, Statutes of 2022.***Space Force.*

Amends certain provisions in state law to include the United States (US) Space Force among the lists of Armed Forces entities.

AB 1731 (Davies)**Chapter 380, Statutes of 2022.***Postsecondary education: Title 38 awards: postsecondary educational institutions: application for approval or renewal.*

Requires the California State Approving Agency for Veterans Education (CSAAVE), on or before January 1, 2024, to establish regulations requiring postsecondary educational institutions to provide specified information to CSAAVE as part of an application for approval or renewal.

AB 1768 (Cooper)**Vetoed.***State employees: active duty compensation and benefits.*

Removes specific references to federal law and instead refers to provisions in California law that identify events (i.e., Presidential determination necessary to augment forces for any operational mission, or during a time of national emergency declared by the President, or as otherwise authorized by law) which establish certain rights to compensation and benefits while a state employee is on active duty as a member of the California National Guard (CNG) or United States (U.S.) military reserve for purposes of establishing how long affected state employees are required to receive active duty compensation and benefits.

AB 2032 (Garcia)

Vetoed.

Ending Military and Veteran Suicide Task Force.

Would have required the Department of Public Health (DPH) to establish the End Military Suicide Task Force (Task Force) to systematically reduce, on an annual basis, military suicides and to provide a plan by June 1, 2025, for the elimination of all military suicides in the state by January 1, 2030.

AB 2119 (Flora)

Chapter 381, Statutes of 2022.

Veterans: Medical Foster Home Program.

Authorizes the California Department of Social Services (CDSS) to establish a program to issue licenses for medical foster homes for veterans as allowed under the United States Department of Veterans Affairs (USDVA) and delineates the administrative requirements for the program.

AB 2509 (Fong)

Chapter 382, Statutes of 2022.

Vehicles: vehicle license fee and registration fees: exemptions.

Exempts Purple Heart recipients and their surviving spouses from vehicle registration fees beginning January 1, 2027.

AB 2949 (Lee)

Chapter 871, Statutes of 2022.

Vehicles: toll exemptions.

Exempts vehicles registered to veterans displaying specialized license plates from paying tolls or related fines.

AB 2963 (Committee on Military and Veterans Affairs)

Chapter 130, Statutes of 2022.

Veterans: California Central Coast Veterans Cemetery Advisory Committee.

This bill eliminates references in Military and Veterans Code specifying the composition of the California Central Coast Veterans Cemetery Advisory Committee to local bodies that have been dissolved, and amends the composition of the advisory committee.

AJR 7 (Patterson)

Res. Chapter 593, Statutes of 2021

State veterans cemeteries: Hmong veterans.

Urges the United States Congress and the President of the United States to permit states to extend burial and memorial benefits to Hmong veterans at state veterans' cemeteries.

AJR 17 (Waldron)

Res. Chapter 96, Statutes of 2022

Military behavioral health care.

Urges the President and the Congress of the United States to take all measures to ensure that military veterans can access necessary treatment for mental health and substance abuse disorders in a timely manner.

AJR 19 (Eduardo Garcia)

Res. Chapter 144, Statutes of 2022

Deported veterans.

Urges the federal government to implement and streamline the process for service members and veterans to become citizens immediately, halt deportations of veterans, and pardon all veterans who have been deported and bring them home.

SENATE BILLS

SB 352 (Eggman)

Chapter 183, Statutes of 2021

The military: sexual harassment.

Establishes that an offense of sexual harassment by a member of the active militia is a stand-alone offense in California's incorporation of the UCMJ, punishable by specified military proceedings or by a court-martial. This bill requires the release of the Sexual Assault Prevention and Response Report to the public, and clarifies that crimes (including sexual crimes) committed while on active duty are not protected from civil or criminal liability.

SB 498 (Umberg)

Chapter 688, Statutes of 2021

Funds for the provision of legal services to indigent persons: disabled veterans.

Increases the income limit for free legal services funded by grants administered by the State Bar of California from the current 125 percent of the federal poverty line to 200 percent of the federal poverty line, and exempts compensation to veterans for service-related disabilities from this income calculation.

SB 614 (Archuleta)

Chapter 184, Statutes of 2021

California Military Department Support Fund activities.

Authorizes the Adjutant General and the Military Department (CMD) to enter into a memorandum of agreement, as specified, to conduct CMD Support Fund activities and to expend money in the CMD Support Fund to pay a nonprofit military or veteran foundation, military organization, or other entity for the sole purpose of supporting CMD Support Fund activities if that money was donated for those purposes.

SB 661 (Newman)

Chapter 549, Statutes of 2021

Veterans' farm and home loan program.

Allows the California Department of Veterans Affairs (CalVet) the authority to refinance veteran home loans underwritten by the CalVet Home Loan Program; and allows the Secretary to designate a deputy, employee, or other official at CalVet to act for them and represent them at meetings, the power to enter into contracts, and authorize and sign any and all documents necessary for effectuating the sale of bonds. The bill also makes eligible for lending, members of the California National Guard or a reserve component of any branch of the United States armed forces who has completed not less than a six-year commitment and was released under honorable conditions.

SB 665 (Umberg)

Vetoed

Employment policy: voluntary veterans' preference.

Would have enacted the Voluntary Veterans' Preference Employment Policy Act to authorize a private employer to establish a veterans' preference employment policy for hiring and retaining employees.

SB 949 (Laird)

Chapter 135, Statutes of 2022.

Veterans: California Central Coast State Veterans Cemetery.

This bill repeals the requirement that the State Controller annually report to the Legislature on the status of the California Central Coast State Veterans Cemetery (CCCVC) at Ford Ord Endowment Fund. This bill also deletes obsolete provisions related to the construction of the CCCVC at Fort Ord.

SB 984 (Archuleta)**Chapter 384, Statutes of 2022.***Military service: leave of absence: pay and benefits.*

This bill includes National Guard inactive duty drills as “active duty” and requires the state to pay National Guard state employee members for their inactive drills as if they were serving on active duty (i.e., their state salary or compensation for 30 days, as specified).

SB 1195 (Grove)

SB 1311 (Eggman)**Chapter 620, Statutes of 2022.***Veterans: protections.*

This bill enacts the Military and Veterans Consumer Protection Act of 2022, which strengthens California’s existing military consumer protection laws by enhancing existing legal and financial protections for service members and their families by, among other things, prohibiting a person from conditioning the receipt of a military discount on the wavier of any right of the recipient under state of federal law and voiding any such waiver.

SB 1435 (Committee on Military and Veterans Affairs)**Chapter 137, Statutes of 2022.***Veteran home use: reporting.*

This bill requires the California Department of Veterans Affairs (CalVet) to conduct its required reviews of each state veterans’ home on a specified schedule. The bill also requires CalVet to update each report every five years, submit a copy to the Legislature and post each report on the CalVet internet website.

SJR 3 (Archuleta)**Res. Chapter 129, Statutes of 2021***Battleship USS Iowa Museum and National Museum of the Surface Navy.*

Urges the United States Congress to pass, and the President of the United States to sign, the Battleship USS Iowa National Museum of the Surface Navy Act of 2021.

SJR 15 (Glazer)**Res. Chapter 112, Statutes of 2022.***Port Chicago 50.*

This resolution urges the President of the United States and the Congress of the United States to take action to restore honor to the sailors unjustly blamed for, and the sailors convicted of mutiny following, the disaster at the Port Chicago Naval Magazine in Concord, California, during World War II, and to rectify any mistreatment by the military of those sailors, including the full exoneration of those who were convicted at court-martial.

BILLS IN LEGISLATURE:

The following bills, if enacted would do the following:

ASSEMBLY BILLS

AB 225 (Gray, Gallagher, Patterson)

Department of Consumer Affairs: boards: veterans: military spouses: licenses.

Expands the temporary licensure of spouses and registered domestic partners of active-duty military members, requiring listed boards to issue temporary licenses to veterans and active duty members of the U.S. Armed Forces within specified periods proximal to their separation.

In Senate Committee on B., P. & E.D: Hearing postponed by committee (June 30, 2021). From Senate committee without further action.

AB 411 (Irwin)

Veterans Housing and Homeless Prevention Bond Act of 2022.

Authorizes, subject to voter approval, the issuance of \$600 million in general obligation bonds to provide affordable housing under the Veterans Housing and Homeless Prevention Bond Act of 2022.

In Senate Appropriations Committee: Held under submission (August 11, 2022). From Senate committee without further action.

AB 459 (Mathis)

Vehicles: registration fees: exceptions.

Requires the Department of Motor Vehicles (DMV) to offer a partially disabled veteran a prorated vehicle registration fee, and directs DMV to set the prorated fee offered at a percentage of the total fees due equal to the percentage at which the veteran's disability has been rated by the Department of Veterans Affairs or the military service from which the veteran was discharged.

In Assembly Appropriations Committee: Held under submission (May 20). Died pursuant to Art. IV, Sec. 10(c) of the Constitution (January 31, 2022).

AB 1032 (Cooper)

State employees: active duty order: pay and benefits.

Extends the period of compensation (i.e., pay, benefits, and reimbursement of the insurance premium for a federally sponsored income protection program) that a state employee, who is a member of the California National Guard or United States (U.S.) military reserve organization and ordered to active duty by the U.S. President, as specified, is entitled to receive from 180 calendar days to 365 calendar days; authorizes the Governor to, by executive order, extend the period of time a state employee may receive benefits up to 1,460 calendar days, and makes conforming changes for these purposes.

In Assembly Committee on M. & V.A. (April 19, 2021). Died pursuant to Art. IV, Sec. 10(c) of the Constitution (February 1, 2022).

AB 1299 (Voepel)

Governor's Military Council.

Extends the sunset of the Governor's Military Council to January 1, 2028.

In Assembly Committee on M. & V.A. (March 4). Died pursuant to Art. IV, Sec. 10(c) of the Constitution (January 31, 2022).

AB 1315 (Committee on Military and Veterans Affairs)

Veterans' homes: lease of property.

Specifies the types of easements eligible for an existing exemption for easement from state law strictly governing the use of real property at the California Veterans Homes.

In Senate Committee on M. & V.A. (May 27). From Senate committee without further action (November 20, 2022).

AB 1470 (Mathis)

Ending Military Suicide Task Force.

Requires the California Department of Public Health to establish the End Military Suicide Task Force to systematically reduce, on an annual basis, military suicides and to provide a plan by June 1, 2023, for the elimination of all military suicides in the state by January 1, 2027.

In Assembly Committee on Appropriations: Held under submission (May 20, 2021). Died pursuant to Art. IV, Sec. 10(c) of the Constitution (January 31, 2022).

AB 1606 (Ramos)

Public postsecondary education: veterans: waiver of mandatory systemwide tuition and fees.

Expands eligibility for tuition and fee waivers and other educational benefits provided to children and dependents of military veterans attending the University of California (UC), California State University (CSU), or a California community college (CCC).

In Assembly Committee on Appropriations: Referred to suspense file (May 11, 2022). Held under submission (May 19, 2022).

AB 2837 (C. Garcia)

Vehicles: disabled veterans.

Reduces, from 100% to 70%, the disability rating required for an individual to be considered a disabled veteran for purposes of the Vehicle Code.

In Assembly Committee on Appropriations, referred to suspense file (May 11, 2022). Held under submission (May 19, 2022).

AB 2898 (Fong)

Property taxation: exemption: principal residence: veterans and their unmarried surviving spouses.

Expands, for lien dates occurring on and after the effective date of this bill and before January 1, 2033, the disabled veteran's property tax exemption by doubling the allowable exemption amount to \$200,000, or \$300,000 if the household income of the claimant does not exceed \$40,000 (adjusted for inflation). Declares the objective of expanding the exemption and requires, by July 1, 2024, and annually thereafter, the State Board of Equalization (BOE) to submit a report to the Legislature with specified property tax data. Prohibits the state from reimbursing any local agency for lost property tax revenues.

In Assembly Committee on Appropriations: referred to suspense file (May 18, 2022). Held under submission (May 19, 2022).

AB 2952 (Gabriel)

Driver's licenses: veteran designation.

Allows an applicant for a driver's license or identification card (ID), who served for another country in military operations that supported the United States during the Vietnam War and who later became a naturalized citizen, to request a "Non-US Vietnam Veteran" designation on their driver's license or identification card.

In Assembly Committee on Appropriations: referred to suspense file (May 11, 2022). Held under submission (May 19, 2022).

AJR 10 (Choi, Nguyen, Quirk-Silva)

Veterans cemeteries: Republic of Korea and Republic of Vietnam veterans.

Urges the United States Congress and the President of the United States to extend burial and memorial benefits at national cemeteries to Republic of Korea and Republic of Vietnam nationals who served in the Vietnam War and subsequently became naturalized citizens of the United States.

In Assembly. Concurrence in Senate amendments pending. Re-referred to Committee on M. & V.A. pursuant to Assembly Rule 77.2 (September 1). From committee without further action (November 30, 2022).

AJR 13 (Nguyen)

Veterans cemeteries: Republic of Vietnam veterans.

Urges the United States Congress and the President of the United States to extend burial and memorial benefits at national cemeteries to Republic of Vietnam nationals who served in the Vietnam War and subsequently became naturalized citizens of the United States.

In Assembly Committee on M. & V.A. (May 13). From committee without further action (November 20, 2022).

SENATE BILLS

SB 43 (Umberg)

Veterans cemetery: County of Orange.

Deletes site specific selection requirements for Southern California Veterans Cemetery in the City of Irvine, and instead requires the California Department of Veterans Affairs to acquire, study, design, develop, construct, and equip a state-owned and veterans cemetery in the City of Irvine, in accordance with the City's enacted laws and ordinances.

In Assembly Committee on Appropriations: referred to suspense file (August 3, 2022). Held in committee and under submission (August 11, 2022).

SB 348 (Grove)

Veterans' homes: closure.

Requires the California Department of Veterans Affairs to convene a task force to review any proposal for closure of a California Veteran's home, as specified, and submit recommendations to the Legislature.

In Assembly Committee on Appropriations, referred to suspense (August 19, 2022). Held in committee and under submission (August 26).

SB 399 (Umberg)

Specialized license plates: professional sports.

Requires the California Department of Veteran Affairs to sponsor a professional sports plate and clarifies that other agencies may still sponsor a professional sports plate.

In Assembly Committee on Appropriations, referred to suspense (August 19, 2022). Held in committee and under submission (August 26).

SB 1357 (Archuleta)

Property taxation: exemption: disabled veteran homeowners.

Exempts from property tax, for lien dates occurring on or after January 1, 2023, but occurring before January 1, 2033, the property owned by, and constituting the principal place of residence of, a veteran who is 100% disabled.

In Assembly Committee on Appropriations: placed on suspense file (August 3, 2022). Held in committee and under submission (August 11, 2022).