

# SENATE APPROPRIATIONS COMMITTEE FISCAL NOTE

**BILL NO.** House Bill 1231

**PRINTER NO.** 2158

**AMOUNT**

No Fiscal Impact

**FUND**

General Fund

**DATE INTRODUCED**

April 17, 2017

**PRIME SPONSOR**

Representative Solomon

**DESCRIPTION**

House Bill 1231 amends Title 51 (Military Affairs) of the Pennsylvania Consolidated Statutes to provide for a veterans registry within the Department of Military and Veterans Affairs.

This legislation codifies into law the Department of Military and Veterans Affairs' Veterans Registry. A new §712 (Veterans Registry) is established as follows:

- Requires the Department of Military and Veterans Affairs (DMVA) to establish a registry of veterans residing in the Commonwealth in order to provide information on federal, state and local government benefits, programs and services available to veterans and to link veterans with resources that can provide assistance;
- Requires the DMVA, if permission is granted by the registrant, to share the registrant's information with county directors of veterans affairs and other state agencies;
- Requires the DMVA to coordinate with other state agencies that have contact with veterans to establish a paper and online registry form to enable state agencies to assist the DMVA in registering veterans;
- Requires the DMVA to provide access to a paper and online form which contains a statement of purpose for the registry;
- The form shall be developed to obtain the following information relating to the veteran:
  - Personal information, including title, first, middle and last name;
  - Age, gender, address, and county of residence;
  - Ten-digit phone number and email address;
  - Declaration of military service;
  - Benefit and program information requests for various benefits and programs for which veterans may be eligible;
  - A signed statement, or for online applicants, a check-off box allowing the information to be shared with the veteran's county director of veterans affairs and other state agencies; and
  - The state agency that assisted the veteran.

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- Requires other state agencies to do all of the following:
  - Utilize the paper or online registry form to identify veterans the agency serves for the purpose of expanding the registry.
  - Provide assistance in filling out the paper or online registry form; and
  - Submit a registrant's paper registry form to the DMVA within 30 days from the date the veteran opts in to the registry.
- Prohibits the information in the registry from being sold or used for commercial purposes and exempts the information from the Right-to-Know Law; and
- Requires the DMVA to submit a report to the Chairperson and Minority Chairperson of the Senate and House of Representative's Veterans Affairs and Emergency Preparedness Committees, by January 1, 2018, and each January 1 thereafter. The report on the registry shall include the following information:
  - The total number of veterans registered annually;
  - The number of registrants received by each state agency;
  - The number of veterans who choose not to be included in the registry from each state agency; and
  - Outreach expenses incurred by the DMVA.
- Allows the Adjutant General to adopt and promulgate guidelines necessary to carry out the provisions of this new section.

This act shall take effect in 60 days.

### **FISCAL IMPACT:**

The DMVA currently has a veterans' registry that was implemented administratively within the Department. This legislation simply codifies the registry within Title 51 and allows for coordination between additional state agencies to expand the registry.

According to the DMVA, the costs associated with implementing this legislation are considered to be de minimis and assumed to be capable of being absorbed within existing fiscal resources of the Department.