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THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF PENNSYLVANIA

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**HOUSE BILL**

**No. 77**

Session of  
2007

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INTRODUCED BY YUDICHAK, BELFANTI, SIPTROTH, GEORGE, BARRAR,  
CALTAGIRONE, CAPPELLI, CARROLL, CLYMER, COHEN, COSTA, DeLUCA,  
DePASQUALE, EVERETT, FREEMAN, GALLOWAY, GEIST, GIBBONS,  
GRUCELA, HARPER, HENNESSEY, HESS, HUTCHINSON, JAMES, JOSEPHS,  
W. KELLER, KOTIK, LEACH, MANN, MENSCH, MICOZZIE, MUNDY,  
PETRONE, RAMALEY, REICHLEY, ROAE, SABATINA, SCAVELLO,  
SCHRODER, SOLOBAY, STABACK, SURRA, WANSACZ, YOUNGBLOOD,  
HARRIS AND FABRIZIO, JANUARY 30, 2007

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REFERRED TO COMMITTEE ON VETERANS AFFAIRS AND EMERGENCY  
PREPAREDNESS, JANUARY 30, 2007

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AN ACT

1 Providing for bonus pay for certain persons involved in the War  
2 on Terrorism; and making an appropriation.

3 The General Assembly of the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania  
4 hereby enacts as follows:

5 Section 1. Short title.

6 This act shall be known and may be cited as the War on  
7 Terrorism Compensation Act.

8 Section 2. Definitions.

9 The following words and phrases when used in this act shall  
10 have the meanings given to them in this section unless the  
11 context clearly indicates otherwise:

12 "Soldier." Any United States military reservist whose  
13 reserve unit is in Pennsylvania and any member of the  
14 Pennsylvania National Guard who was called to active duty on or

1 after September 11, 2001, to participate in the War on Terrorism  
2 and who has completed one month of active duty. Proof of such  
3 service shall be the official military records of the United  
4 States or such other evidence as is deemed sufficient by the  
5 Adjutant General.

6 "War on Terrorism." Military efforts in the United States  
7 and abroad directly resulting from the terrorism attacks on the  
8 Pentagon, the World Trade Center and the airplane that went down  
9 in Somerset County on September 11, 2001. For the purposes of  
10 this act, the War on Terrorism shall be deemed to have ended  
11 when military efforts cease as ordered by the Commander-in-Chief  
12 of the United States Armed Forces.

13 Section 3. Bonus payment.

14 (a) Compensation.--A bonus payment of \$500 shall be made to  
15 each soldier who is determined to be eligible pursuant to  
16 section 4(a).

17 (b) Exclusion from compensation.--Any individual who has  
18 received a bonus, gratuity or compensation of a nature similar  
19 to that provided for by this act from any other state in the  
20 United States is ineligible for compensation. This exclusion  
21 does not apply to a similar bonus, gratuity or compensation from  
22 the Federal Government.

23 Section 4. Application for compensation.

24 (a) Application to Adjutant General.--Applications shall be  
25 made by a soldier, the facility entitled under section 5(a) or  
26 the beneficiaries designated under section 5(b) on a form  
27 provided by the Adjutant General. The Adjutant General shall  
28 ascertain the applicants who are eligible to receive a bonus  
29 payment pursuant to this act.

30 (b) Time for filing application.--Applications may be filed

1 by a soldier after the soldier has completed one month of active  
2 duty. The Adjutant General shall not accept or consider any  
3 application filed five years after the cessation of the War on  
4 Terrorism.

5 (c) Payment.--Every applicant shall designate in the  
6 application the person or entity to whom payment under this act  
7 shall be made.

8 Section 5. Persons to whom payments shall be made in case of  
9 incompetence or death.

10 (a) Incompetence.--In a case where the soldier is  
11 incompetent, if no guardian has been appointed, payment shall be  
12 made for the benefit of the soldier to the person who is  
13 entitled to payment under subsection (b) or, in the absence of  
14 any such person and if the soldier is in a facility, to the  
15 person in charge of the facility to be expended for the clothing  
16 and incidental needs of the soldier. No part of the compensation  
17 paid to any facility shall be used for the maintenance of the  
18 soldier. A statement from the person in charge of the facility  
19 in which the soldier resides shall be evidence to determine the  
20 competence of the soldier.

21 (b) Death.--In the case of the death of a soldier, payment  
22 shall be made, in the order named, to the:

23 (1) surviving spouse unless the spouse was living  
24 separate and apart from the soldier at the time of departure  
25 for active service;

26 (2) surviving children, share and share alike; or

27 (3) surviving parents.

28 (c) Definitions.--As used in this section, the following  
29 words and phrases shall have the meanings given to them in this  
30 subsection:

1 "Facility." Any mental health establishment, hospital,  
2 clinic, institution, center, day-care center, base service unit,  
3 community mental health center or other organizational unit, or  
4 part thereof, which is devoted primarily to the diagnosis,  
5 treatment, care, rehabilitation or detention of mentally  
6 disabled persons.

7 "Parents." Includes persons who, for a period of not less  
8 than one year, acted in the capacity of a foster parent to the  
9 soldier immediately prior to the soldier having attained 18  
10 years of age.

11 Section 6. Applicant to designate beneficiaries.

12 Every person making application for compensation shall set  
13 forth in the application the names and addresses of all persons  
14 who, under this act, would be entitled to receive compensation  
15 in the event of the death of the applicant. If the applicant  
16 dies before the payment of the compensation, the application  
17 shall be deemed to inure to the benefit of the person next  
18 entitled to compensation, and payment shall be made to the  
19 person upon proof of identity satisfactory to the Adjutant  
20 General. If no person designated in this act as being entitled  
21 to compensation survives the soldier, the right to the  
22 compensation shall cease.

23 Section 7. Exemption from attachment, etc.

24 No sum payable under this act to a soldier or to any other  
25 person under this act shall be subject to attachment, levy or  
26 seizure under any legal or equitable process and shall be exempt  
27 from all State taxation. No right to compensation under this act  
28 shall be assignable, except as otherwise provided in this act,  
29 or shall serve as a security for any loan. Any assignment or  
30 loan made in violation of this section shall be void.

1 Assignments to any incorporated or unincorporated organization  
2 of soldiers or veterans, any nonprofit corporation formed solely  
3 for the purpose of aiding disabled or incapacitated soldiers or  
4 veterans and the State Veterans' Commission shall be valid.

5 Section 8. Penalty for charging fees for assisting soldiers.

6 A person who charges or collects or attempts to charge or  
7 collect, either directly or indirectly, any fee or other  
8 compensation for assisting, in any manner, a soldier in  
9 obtaining any of the benefits provided under this act commits a  
10 misdemeanor of the second degree.

11 Section 9. Administration of compensation program.

12 The Adjutant General shall administer the compensation  
13 program. For that purpose application forms shall be prepared  
14 and distributed, applications shall be investigated, and, if  
15 satisfied of the proof of an application, compensation shall be  
16 approved and payment of compensation shall be made. The Adjutant  
17 General shall promulgate rules and regulations to implement,  
18 administer and enforce this act. The Adjutant General shall, as  
19 soon as practicable after the effective date of this section,  
20 prepare and distribute a digest explaining the provisions of  
21 this act to assist soldiers in filing their applications and  
22 shall, from time to time, prepare and distribute additional or  
23 supplementary information as may be found necessary. The  
24 Adjutant General shall enlist, as far as possible, the services  
25 of soldier and veteran organizations in this Commonwealth in the  
26 dissemination of the information.

27 Section 10. Appropriation.

28 The General Assembly shall appropriate the sum of \$2,000,000  
29 to carry out the provisions of this act.

30 Section 40. Effective date.

1 This act shall take effect in 60 days.