

Joint Leadership Council of Veterans Service Organizations
Meeting Minutes
July 25, 2018

A meeting of the Joint Leadership Council of Veterans Service Organizations (the JLC) was held on July 25, 2018, at the American Legion, 1708 Commonwealth Ave., Richmond.

Members Present

- Tom Wozniak, Air Force Association
- Rick Oertel, American Legion
- Richard Mansfield, AMVETS
- Michael Flanagan, Association of the United States Army
- Denice Williams, Disabled American Veterans
- Lauren Augustine, Iraq & Afghanistan Veterans of America
- Robert Herbert, Legion of Valor
- Kenneth Shelton, Fifth Baptist Church Veterans Ministry
- William Ashton, Fleet Reserve Association
- John Clickener, Marine Corps League
- Frank Wickersham, Military Officers Association of America
- Jim Cuthbertson, Military Order of the Purple Heart
- Craig Cressman, Navy Mutual Aid Association
- David Sitler, Reserve Officers Association
- Perry Taylor, Roanoke Valley Veterans Council
- Dan Boyer, Veterans of Foreign Wars
- Robert Barnette, Virginia Army/Air National Guard Enlisted Association
- Judy Reid, Women Marines Association
- Jim Icenhour, Chairman, Board of Veterans Services
- Frank Finelli, Chairman, Veterans Services Foundation,
- Commissioner John L. Newby II, Department of Veterans Services

Members Absent

- Tim Whitmore, Korean War Veterans Association
- William Barrett, Military Order of the World Wars
- Glenn Rodriguez, Navy Seabee Veterans of America
- Jon Ostrowski, Non Commissioned Officers Association
- Raymond Kenney, Paralyzed Veterans of America
- Charles Montgomery, Vietnam Veterans of America
- Adam Provost, Virginia National Guard Association

Alternates Present (representing their VSO)

- Preston Curry, Paralyzed Veterans of America
- George Corbett, Vietnam Veterans of America
- Fallon Martin, Virginia National Guard Association

Alternates Present (not representing their VSO)

- Jim Barrett, Marine Corps League
- Rich Anderson, Military Officers Association of America
- Mark Atchison, Military Order of the Purple Heart

Commonwealth of Virginia Officials Present

- Asst. Sec. Leslie Frazier, Office of the Secretary of Veterans and Defense Affairs
- Steven Combs, Department of Veterans Services (DVS)
- Carrie Ann Alford, DVS
- Tom Herthel, DVS
- Glendalynn Glover, DVS
- Jgiann Page, DVS
- Brig. General Walter Mercer, VaNG (Ret), Department of Military Affairs (DMA)
- Cassy Horn, DMA
- Linda Ford, Department of Motor Vehicles (DMV)
- Karla Boughey, Veterans Services Foundation (VSF)
- Mark Sneseavage, Office of Senator Bryce Reeves

Others Present

- Maggie Wickersham, Military Officers Association of America (MOAA)
- Mary Lou Wassel, MOAA
- Jack Hilgers, MOAA
- Jay Marts, AMVETS
- Brandon Hughes, MOPH
- Jillian Smith-Hughes
- Erica Eccleston, American Legion Staff
- Beila Gray, American Legion Staff
- Sue Oertel, American Legion Auxiliary

Items included in the Agenda Packet

Agenda

May 2, 2018 meeting minutes (Agenda Item V)

Election of Chair and Vice Chair motion (Agenda Item VII)

Reports (Agenda Item VIII)

- Board of Veterans Services
- Veterans Services Foundation

Handouts for Constitutional Question and new DMV license plate (Agenda Item IX)

New Business (Agenda Item XI)

- Follow up on Report of the JLC Constitution & Bylaws committees – 4 changes for review
- Introduction of potential 2019 JLC initiatives
- Proposed meeting dates for 2019

Opening, Pledge of Allegiance, Invocation & Thoughts

Vice Chairman Frank Wickersham called the meeting to order at 10:02 a.m., and led the Council in the Pledge of Allegiance.

In Chaplain L. T. “Tim” Whitmore’s absence, Mr. Wickersham delivered an opening prayer.

Roll Call of VSOs, Quorum Determination, Introduction of New Members, and Introduction of Guests

The roll was called, and 21 of the 25 Veterans Service Organizations (VSOs) represented on the Joint Leadership Council of Veterans Service Organizations (the JLC) were recorded as being represented at the time of the roll call. Mr. Jim Icenhour, the Chairman of the Board of Veterans Services (BVS); Mr. Frank Finelli, Chairman, Veterans Services Foundation (VSF); and DVS Commissioner John L. Newby II, were recorded as present. A quorum was determined.

Vice Chairman Wickersham introduced the new members to the JLC who were present and asked them to stand as able and be recognized: Tom Wozniak, Air Force Association (AFA); Mike Flanagan, Association of the United States Army (AUSA); Denice Williams, Disabled American Veterans (DAV); Craig Cressman, Navy Mutual Aid Association (NMAA); Robert Barnette, Virginia Army/Air National Guard Enlisted Association (VaA/ANGEA); and Judy Reid, Women Marines Association (WMA). They were given a round of applause as a welcome to the JLC.

Vice Chairman Wickersham asked the guests in attendance to introduce themselves. Their names and organizations are recorded above. Vice Chairman Wickersham welcomed them to the meeting.

Approval of the Agenda, Approve May 2, 2018 Meeting Minutes

Vice Chairman Wickersham asked for approval of the agenda. Mr. Jim Cuthbertson made a **motion, seconded** by Mr. Dave Sitler to approve the meeting agenda. The motion carried **unanimously**. Vice Chairman Wickersham asked for approval of the May 2, 2018 meeting minutes and agenda. Mr. Craig Cressman made a **motion, seconded** by Mr. John Clickener to approve the minutes. The motions carried **unanimously**. (Agenda is *Attachment 1*)

Special Presentation – JLC Overview/Orientation

With seven new representatives to the JLC, Deputy Commissioner Steve Combs gave a brief orientation to the Council. The powerpoint presentation covered the origins of DVS and JLC, organizational charts and maps from 2003 and the present to give a visual of how DVS has grown and the JLC has played a role in it. Mr. Combs reviewed the structure, powers and duties of the JLC and responsibilities of the members, and the partner boards –BVS, VSF, Virginia War Memorial Board (VWMB), and the Virginia Military Advisory Council (VMAC).

Members were each given a member handbook binder with all the presentation information and other materials related to the JLC. The presentation was also distributed after the meeting to all the members via email.

ELECTION OF CHAIR AND VICE CHAIR

Mr. Dan Boyer, Chair of the Nominating Committee, reminded the members of the protocol for electing new officers and announced the candidate for Chairman: Frank G. Wickersham, III MOAA representative. Mr. Boyer asked for any additional nominations. Hearing none, he called the vote. Mr. Wickersham was elected **unanimously**. Mr. Boyer announced the candidate for Vice Chairman: Perry “Ace” Taylor Roanoke Valley Veterans Council representative. Mr. Boyer asked for any additional nominations. Hearing none, he called the vote. Mr. Taylor was elected **unanimously**. (*Attachment 2*).

Mr. Boyer stated that per the JLC Constitution “Newly elected officers will assume the responsibility of the position to which they were elected at the conclusion of the meeting during which election occurs.” He said that therefore, due to the previous chair stepping down at the end of the 2nd Quarter meeting, a motion needs to be made to allow the new chair to assume responsibilities of the position immediately upon election.

Mr. John Clickener made a **motion, seconded** by Mr. Rich Mansfield to allow the new chair to assume responsibilities of the position immediately upon election. The motion carried **unanimously**.

REPORTS

Board of Veterans Services

BVS Chairman Jim Icenhour gave the BVS report stating that BVS has not met since the last JLC meeting and the BVS new appointments have not been made yet. (*Attachment 3*).

Veterans Services Foundation

New VSF Chairman Frank Finelli gave the VSF report and stated that he is looking forward to working with the JLC on many veterans issues. (*Attachment 4*).

Virginia Military Advisory Council

Mr. Bill Barrett was not in attendance and did not submit a report.

Virginia War Memorial Board

Ms. Marie Juliano was not in attendance and did not submit a report.

DVS Update

Commissioner Newby thanked the JLC for their on-going support and working diligently with his staff to assist Virginia’s veterans.

Update from the Virginia National Guard

Gen. Mercer gave a short update on the Virginia National Guard, focusing on their legislative package for 2019, still in development. He said they would be pursuing:

- Free tuition
 - Requesting an additional \$1 million in State Tuition Assistance (currently receive about \$3 million) to keep pace with neighboring states who offer this benefit.

- State Active Duty Pay
 - Will set a “minimum wage” of approximately \$125 per day for E1-E5 (currently less than \$90) to help with recruiting and retention.
- Employer Incentives
 - Exploring possibilities with DVS and VEC.

He also gave an update on the pending deployment of the 529th Combat Sustainment Support Battalion to the Middle East in support of Operation Inherent Resolve, and announced he had recently retired, but is still working for the Virginia National Guard as Chief Operating Officer, which is a civilian post. He said that Brig. Gen. Lapthe C. Flora will succeed him as the Virginia National Guard Assistant Adjutant General - Army.

Mr. Bill Ashton asked if education benefits in other states, that he had referenced, must be used in those states. Ms. Cassy Horn, DMA Policy Director, said that yes, those guardsmen who live in Virginia but are part of another state’s Guard and receive this benefit must use the education benefit in that state, i.e. Tennessee.

Mr. Ashton also asked about the new headquarters and when it will be ready. General Mercer said they are working through the final punch list and anticipate moving in in September. He said they are all looking forward to it and would like to host a JLC meeting once the move is complete.

The General’s powerpoint slides were distributed after the meeting to all the members via email.

Review of 2018 DVS budget and legislation

Ms. Alford gave a brief power point presentation of where DVS stood with the final version of the budget finally passed and signed by the Governor.

In particular, she covered the next steps in the constitutional amendment process for HB71/SB900, which were JLC priority number 1. The constitutional amendment question wording was distributed to the JLC members (*Attachment 5*) She asked for their assistance in promoting awareness of the question on the November ballot and encouraging people to vote “yes.”

She gave an update on HB737, which is now law and allows for a “Veteran” identifier on drivers’ licenses. Ms. Linda Ford from the Virginia Department of Motor Vehicles (DMV) was in attendance and spoke for a few minutes on the new program. She passed out materials from the DMV to the JLC members to help promote the veteran identifier (*Attachment 6*). She also gave an update on the Real ID licenses that will begin being issued on October 1 and encouraged JLC members with licenses not expiring before October to wait and get a Real ID license with the veteran identifier.

Mr. Bill Ashton asked about online versus going into a DMV location to be helped with the veteran identifier. She stated that the whole process will be available online. The veteran will have to upload his or her DD214 but it is a secure system and will allow veterans to do the whole process from home. Ms. Alford also mentioned the handout at everyone’s seat with updated data

on DVS programs and services. (*Attachment 7*).

She finished her presentation with the new “I Support Women Veterans” license plate pre-applications that had been distributed to each of the members (*Attachment 8*). Delegate Jennifer Carroll Foy is continuing to work with the DMV on a new license plate for everyone in Virginia to show their support for Women Veterans. The plate design and applications were debuted at our 2018 Virginia Women Veterans Summit.

Ms. Alford stated that one does not need to be a woman veteran (or a woman!) to get the plate, she anticipates the plate being very popular with grandparents, parents and other family members to show support. Also, this will be a revenue sharing plate: for each plate sold, DVS will receive \$15, which will help fund the Women Veterans Summit in future years.

DVS is currently promoting this through our social media channels. The DMV will create the official template once 450 applications have been collected. Ms. Karen Gordwin, who is still active duty in the Navy and stationed at the Pentagon is accepting the applications and checks. Once she receives 450 applications she will submit them all to DMV and Del. Carroll Foy will submit the legislation in January to the General Assembly.

Mr. Ashton asked about the payment and if it must be a check. Ms. Alford answered that the applications and check or money order must go to Ms. Gordwin since it is not a real plate yet within the DMV system. The checks are put into a secure, dedicated bank account. Once she receives 450 applications she will submit the applications and one check to DMV. If anyone is nervous about mailing in a check, they can do a money order which gives some level of protection if purchased at a post office.

The presentation was distributed to the members via email after the meeting.

Presentation on DVS Benefits

Mr. Tom Herthel, Benefits Director, gave an update on the Benefits Section and thanked the JLC members for all their support over the past several years..

He gave an update on the new offices and all current offices have all been updated or relocated. 3 new offices will be opening in 2018 – the Pentagon, which should be in August, as well as new offices at Fort Belvoir (Fairfax Co.) and near NAS Oceana (Virginia Beach). He gave an update on their partnership with VVFS and staff relocating to some of their offices in the next year. He gave an update on the claims process and adjudication process.

He updated the JLC on Benefits converting their online system from BeneVets to Vetrespec, which should occur this summer.

Mr. Ashton asked about VSRs assisting out-of-state veterans with claims. Mr. Herthel said that yes, all Virginia VSRs are able to assist any veteran with their claim as long as we hold or are given power of attorney by the veteran.

Mr. Dan Boyer asked about retention rates. Mr. Herthel stated that he is currently at about 8 –

10% loss, which is normal and it is significantly down from the 40% attrition rate he had when he came on board in 2014.

Mr. Jim Cuthbertson asked about duplication and VSOs also assisting. Mr. Herthel stated that Benefits would be overrun if the VSOs stopped assisting with claims. He would like to see some shared training between the VSOs and Benefits staff and other efforts to coordinate.

The presentation was distributed to the members via email after the meeting.

NEW BUSINESS

Follow up on the Report of the Constitution and By-Laws Review Committee

Mr. Ace Taylor led the discussion and began with a call for a motion to untable the report of the Constitution and By-laws Committee as presented and tabled on May 2, 2018.

Mr. Wickersham asked the Secretary to reread the motion. Ms. Alford read from the May 2 meeting minutes: “Mr. Wickersham made a **motion, seconded** by Mr. Moran, to table the remaining amendments and bring them back at the July 25 meeting for further discussion. The motion passed **unanimously**.”

Mr. Taylor made the **motion, seconded** by Mr. Boyer, to untable the report and bring back up for review. The motion passed **unanimously**.

Mr. Taylor made the **motion, seconded** by Mr. Boyer, to go through the 5 amendments one at a time. The motion passed **unanimously**. Mr. Taylor began with proposed change 1: amending the Aim and Purpose.

Change #1 – Article II, Paragraph 1 – Amend the Aim and Purpose as proposed was to change the Aim and Purpose statement to:

“As a separate and distinct entity of veterans service organizations of Virginia, it is the JLC’s objective to **advise and advocate with the Governor, General Assembly and the Department of Veterans Services regarding policy and legislation on matters of concern to veterans, military, Virginia National Guard and Reserves and their families** ~~be mindful of and to address and advocate for the needs of Virginia’s veterans.~~”

New language is in blue, language currently in the Constitution to be stricken is in red.

Vice Chair Taylor opened the floor for discussion for and against. Ms. Alford reminded the members that they were sent these changes in writing to review before the meeting, and they were to begin with continuing discussion from the last meeting as there had been a motion to return to the amendments at this meeting.

Mr. Ashton asked if this change would have to go before the legislature. Mr. Combs responded that this one change would not, but the others would.

Mr. Taylor made the **motion, seconded** by Mr. Tom Wozniak to approve the proposed change. The motion passed **unanimously**.

Change #2 – Article III, Paragraph 1 – Amend Eligibility

1. Eligibility. Qualifying veterans service organizations shall be 1) composed principally of and controlled by veterans of the United States Armed Forces, 2) a registered nonprofit organization in good standing, incorporated for the purpose of promoting programs designed to assist veterans of the armed forces of the United States and their Virginia-domiciled surviving spouses, orphans, and dependents, ~~and~~ 3) active and in good standing with its parent national organization, if such a parent organization exists, and 4) since the primary mission of the JLC is to provide advice and guidance to the Governor and the General Assembly, show a proven commitment to working with the state or federal government on policy and/or legislative solutions for veterans, military and/or national guard.

New language is in blue, language currently in the Constitution to be stricken is in red.

Vice Chair Taylor opened the floor for discussion for and against.

Ms. Alford reminded the members that one of their main reasons for being was to work on policy and advise the Governor and General Assembly – that is what Governor Warner’s comments about “if you all ever get together on issues, you’ll be unstoppable” was referring to. She stated that with the explosion of non-profit organizations in the past decade wanting to help veterans, the eligibility should reflect the core mission of working on policy and VSOs demonstrating their track record of working on policy and the state and/or federal level. She again stated that she receives 6-8 inquiries a year about joining the JLC. Many are non-profit organizations run by a veteran or for veterans, but with no statewide or national presence in the traditional VSO sense and no record of advocating for legislative priorities.

Several members expressed hesitance to move forward with the language as presented. The Chairman requested a motion with the advice to members to vote no.

Vice Chair Taylor made the **motion, seconded** by Mr. Rich Mansfield to move the amendment with advice to vote no. The motion failed **unanimously**.

Change #3 – Article III, Paragraph 1 – Amend to add subparagraph f. along with necessary technical amendments to d. and e. if new subparagraph is accepted.

- a. A statement of good standing from the parent organization, if such an organization exists – To show that the organization is “active and in good standing with its parent national organization”;~~and~~
- b. Confirmation from the State Corporation Commission of the current status of the organization, if available – To show that the organization is “in good standing”;
and
- c. A documented legislative program with outreach throughout the Commonwealth is required – To show national/global legislative outreach is

highly desired since many Virginia residents currently serve outside the Commonwealth.

New language is in blue, language currently in the Constitution to be stricken is in red.

Vice Chair Taylor opened the floor for discussion for and against.

Mr. Combs once again spoke against this amendment, citing that it would trigger the need for legislation.

The Chairman requested a motion with the advice to members to vote no.

Vice Chair Taylor made the **motion, seconded** by Ms. Fallon Martin to move the amendment with advice to vote no. The motion failed **unanimously**.

Change #4 – Article III, Paragraph 2 – Amend Representation

2. Representation. In the interest of manageability and to retain its effectiveness, membership in the JLC shall be limited to a maximum of 26 veteran’s organizations. When an opening occurs, priority consideration will be given to those with the largest potential legislative impact.

New language is in blue, language currently in the Constitution to be stricken is in red.

Vice Chair Taylor opened the floor for discussion for and against.

Mr. Combs once again spoke against this amendment, citing that it would trigger the need for legislation. He also once again reminded the members that the JLC has been bigger in the past and the flow over time is organic, with VSOs disbanding and falling off the Council and new VSOs stepping in. He mentioned, as an example, this was the last meeting for NAUS, which will be disbanding in June.

Mr. Wickersham asked Commissioner Newby what the process is for a VSO to join the JLC. He reminded the members of the requirements stated in Code and their Constitution. Ms. Alford added her process of screening interested VSOs for their eligibility for inclusion based on the Code and makes recommendations to the Commissioner and Secretary of the Commonwealth.

Mr. Boyer asked about the possibility of a veterans group that is inherently political, and that is what drives their policy initiatives, such as Concerned Veterans for America joining the JLC? He also stated that he wasn’t necessarily for the amendment but it was concerning to him.

Ms. Alford stated that based on current eligibility listed in the Code and Constitution a group like CVA might qualify. The non-partisan requirement in the Constitution refers to the representatives of the VSOs. If that group had a member that wasn’t overtly political, and they met the other requirements it would be difficult to recommend against membership. She said the bigger issue is groups that don’t have any policy focus but want to be part of the JLC for various

reasons and the concern is that they will push their agenda in a legislative way instead of what is best for the veterans.

The Chairman requested a motion with the advice to members to vote no.

Vice Chair Taylor made the **motion, seconded** by Mr. Robert Barnette to move the amendment with advice to vote no. The motion failed **unanimously**.

Since Change #4 failed to pass, Change #5 – Article III, Paragraph 2 – if Change #4 is accepted, necessary technical changes – did not need to be voted on.

Ms. Alford stated that these amendments could trigger a Code change and need for legislation it was possible to do that and if some VSO wanted to work on that and add it to the list of priorities she would work with them on that.

Introduction of Potential Policy Papers for 2019

Mr. Sitler began by referring back to his request at the May 2nd meeting – when he asked Mr. Combs and Ms. Alford to write up and present to the JLC at the July 25 meeting some strategies for advocacy during the 2019 Session.

Ms. Alford stated that while she had unfortunately not created a written report there were two things to discuss. She had talked to Chairman Wickersham about ways to get all the JLC member VSOs involved in the legislative session, which is one of the main roles of the JLC. With the desire of the Council to have a smaller list of initiatives she and the Chair request that for 2019, in addition to the primary sponsor of each paper, at least 2 VSOs sign on as “coordinating sponsors” or “assisting sponsors” or whatever title the JLC comes up with. But the idea is form teams for each paper so there is a whole network reaching out to legislators and available to go to Richmond for committee hearings.

She then stated that allowing the JLC members to pick their own lobby day based on what was best for their schedule in the 2018 Session, due to the new building and not being allowed to do their traditional JLC Day, did not work. Only Dan Boyer made appointments and came to the legislature.

She will pick a day for the JLC to come and lobby – it will be on a Wednesday to coincide with the General Assembly Military & Veterans Caucus but they will not get a room like before. They can meet at the SunTrust building at 7a to gather and then go over to the GAB and after caucus meet with legislators and then go to the House and Senate Galleries. Additionally, if they want to do the traditional reception at the end of the day the VSOs will all have to chip in to pay for it. Ms. Alford is willing to help with arrangements but DVS does not have the funds to cover the costs.

Mr. Sitler then introduced the eight potential policy papers, all of which are listed as *Attachment 10*. He read the titles, beginning with the four papers that were completely new to the JLC, then the one paper that had been rejected for inclusion in 2018 and resubmitted, and then the three 2018 papers that did not pass the legislature and were being resubmitted for inclusion.

Vote to Continue Forward or be Rejected for Each Policy Papers for 2019

Mr. Sitler read each paper title, made a motion to discuss and called on the policy initiative sponsor VSO to begin the discussion with an explanation of the need and reasons for submitting the paper.

The first two papers were submitted with a joint letter from the Presidents of the Virginia National Guard Association (VNGA) and the Virginia Army/Air National Guard Enlisted Association. (*Attachment 9*)

Ms. Fallon Martin, VNGA alternate, presented the first paper: **Increased State Active Duty (SAD) Pay - OBJECTIVE**: To raise minimum State Active Duty (SAD) pay to the equivalent of a service member with the rank of E-6 (Staff Sergeant) with 18 years of service, which is currently just over \$125 per day.

Ms. Martin read through the paper, reiterating some of the points made earlier in the meeting by General Mercer and within the paper regarding recruiting and retention. She also mentioned the Guardsmen who were on duty during the Charlottesville protest last August and they were getting less than half the pay of the state police they were standing shoulder to shoulder with.

Mr. Ashton spoke in support of the issue.

Vice Chair Taylor called the question. Chairman Wickersham asked the secretary to read the motion for each paper.

Ms. Alford read the motion, “motion to accept **Increased State Active Duty (SAD) Pay** as a JLC priority for 2019.” Mr. Wickersham made the **motion, seconded** by Ms. Martin. The motion passed **unanimously**.

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Mr. Sitler read the paper title, made a motion to discuss and called on the policy initiative sponsor VSO to begin the discussion with an explanation of the need and reasons for submitting the paper.

Mr. Robert Barnette, VaA/ANGEA rep, and Ms. Martin both presented the second paper: **Free Tuition for Virginia National Guardsmen - OBJECTIVE**: To offer free tuition to Virginia National Guardsmen at accredited Virginia colleges and universities, including community colleges, trade schools, and for-profit certification programs.

Ms. Martin read through the paper, reiterating some of the points made earlier in the meeting by General Mercer and within the paper regarding recruiting and retention. Mr. Barnette also spoke in favor of this tool to assist Guardsmen and the long term benefits to Virginia of the Guardsmen staying in state, getting higher paying jobs, better economic security and participating in Virginia’s economy.

Mr. Clickener spoke in favor of the paper and said it was an investment in Virginia – these things need to be seen as an investment.

Vice Chair Taylor called the question. Chairman Wickersham asked the secretary to read the motion for each paper.

Ms. Alford read the motion, “motion to accept **Free Tuition for Virginia National Guardsmen** as a JLC priority for 2019.” Mr. Wickersham made the **motion, seconded** by Ms. Martin. The motion passed **unanimously**.

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Mr. Sitler read the paper title, made a motion to discuss and called on the policy initiative sponsor VSO to begin the discussion with an explanation of the need and reasons for submitting the paper.

Ms. Denice Williams, DAV rep, presented the paper: **Personal Property Tax Relief for Certain Disabled Veterans - OBJECTIVE**: To create a unified, cohesive, state-wide system for personal property tax relief to certain disabled veterans.

Ms. Williams read through the paper, reiterating some of the points made in the paper that the idea is to use the same qualifications as the real property tax exemption and have it administered by the localities like the real property tax exemption.

Mr. Ashton asked what the total number of disabled veterans in Virginia who may qualify is. Ms. Williams stated that she did not know. Ms. Alford stated that she did not know off the top of her head, but could get that number from the Commissioners of the Revenue and add it to the paper.

Mr. Steve Herbert asked about the impact to localities and why the local government Budget Offices weren't consulted. He also mentioned that the Virginia Municipal League (VML) would be a good source of information on this type of "pass down expense" to local governments.

Mr. Oertel asked for the recommendation to be amended to become more clearly linked to a program like the real property tax exemption.

Ms. Alford stated that she could amend the Recommendation and reminded everyone that all approved papers will be getting a “spit and polish” from herself and Mr. Sitler before October. She also answered Mr. Herbert's questions that she did not know the exact impact but it was small and the localities had stated they could absorb it. She also stated that it was the Commissioners of the Revenue that administered the real property tax exemption and they were the ones who reported the mandated assessment numbers to her, not the tax departments, and that is why she had consulted with them.

Mr. George Corbett spoke in support of the paper and said it was right to make things standard around the Commonwealth since there was a patchwork of exemptions now.

Mr. Clickener also spoke in support of the paper.

Vice Chair Taylor called the question. Chairman Wickersham asked the secretary to read the motion for each paper.

Ms. Alford read the motion, “motion to accept **Personal Property Tax Relief for Certain Disabled Veterans** as a JLC priority for 2019.” Mr. Wickersham made the **motion, seconded** by Mr. Mansfield. The motion passed **unanimously**.

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Mr. Sitler read the paper title, made a motion to discuss and called on the policy initiative sponsor VSO to begin the discussion with an explanation of the need and reasons for submitting the paper.

Mr. Tom Wozniak, AFA rep, presented the paper: **Protection from malicious bodily injury to Armed Forces - OBJECTIVE**: To ensure protection from malicious, and increasingly common, bodily injury to, or pointing of laser at, members of United States Armed Forces.

Mr. Wozniak read through the paper, reiterating some of the points made in the paper that the idea is to create a penalty for malicious injury from lasers with military aircraft.

Mr. Clickener asked questions about whether this initiative should be supported by the JLC since it is more of a law enforcement issue. Mr. Boyer asked if it is feasible to support since it seems to leave commercial airlines out of it and how would law enforcement enforce this only for actions against military aircraft and vehicles.

Ms. Alford said the issue had been brought up as legislation two previous sessions and the limit on military vehicles may have been the reason the bills died.

Mr. Combs asked Deputy Secretary Areizaga-Soto and Assistant Secretary Frazier, both in attendance, if they would take this paper to the VMAC. They agreed.

Vice Chair Taylor called the question. Chairman Wickersham asked the secretary to read the motion for each paper.

Ms. Alford read the motion, “motion to accept **Protection from malicious bodily injury to Armed Forces** as a JLC priority for 2019.” Mr. Wickersham made the **motion, seconded** by Ms. Martin. The motion failed to pass.

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Mr. Sitler read the paper title, made a motion to discuss and called on the policy initiative sponsor VSO to begin the discussion with an explanation of the need and reasons for submitting the paper.

Mr. Bill Ashton, FRA rep, presented the paper: **Phased-in System for Partial State Tax Exemption for Military Retirement Income - OBJECTIVE**: To reform the Virginia state tax law, creating a phased in system to exempt a portion of military retirement income beginning in 2019.

Mr. Ashton read through the paper, reiterating some of the points made in the paper that the idea is to create a phased-in system for exempting military retiree pay as most states do something. Virginia is one of 9 states that do not offer any form of exemption from income taxes for retirees.

Mr. Boyer spoke in support of the paper and Mr. Mansfield said the JLC should be looking at retention of veterans in Virginia.

Ms. Martin said it would be another tool for retention for the Guard.

Mr. Sitler stated there should be a cap or dollar amount opposed to phased into 100% because that will be more helpful to the lower income veterans that the JLC focuses on assisting through policies and might make it more palatable to the General Assembly.

Ms. Alford reminded the JLC that even without this paper on their priority list, Senator Reeves had patroned a bill in 2018 and it died quickly in Senate Finance due to the fiscal impact. She agreed with Mr. Sitler that a dollar amount exempted instead or phasing up to a percentage less than 100% might be a good idea.

Vice Chair Taylor called the question. Chairman Wickersham asked the secretary to read the motion for each paper.

Ms. Alford read the motion, “motion to accept **Phased-in System for Partial State Tax Exemption for Military Retirement Income** as a JLC priority for 2019.” Mr. Wickersham made the **motion, seconded** by Ms. Martin. The Secretary was uncertain of the roll and asked the Chairman to call a show of hands. The vote was called a second time and The motion passed **17 yea, 4 nay**.

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Chairman Wickersham handed the Chairman’s gavel to Vice Chair Taylor.

Mr. Sitler read the paper title, made a motion to discuss and called on the policy initiative sponsor VSO to begin the discussion with an explanation of the need and reasons for submitting the paper.

Mr. Frank Wickersham, MOAA rep, presented the paper: **Electronic Return of Voted Ballots by Overseas Military - OBJECTIVE**: Enfranchise Virginia’s Overseas Uniformed Service Personnel’s votes by enacting Electronic Return of Voted Absentee Ballots by encrypted means or through special secure web access portal, as a pilot program.

Mr. Wickersham read through the paper, reiterating some of the points made in the paper that it will be a one year pilot program.

As this paper is very familiar with the JLC members there was not much discussion. Mr. Boyer stated “Let’s do it!” Mr. Ashton agreed.

Vice Chair Taylor called the question, and asked the secretary to read the motion for each paper.

Ms. Alford read the motion, “motion to accept **Electronic Return of Voted Ballots by Overseas Military** as a JLC priority for 2019.” Mr. Wickersham made the **motion, seconded** by Mr. Barrette. The motion passed **unanimously**.

The Vice Chair returned the gavel to the Chairman who resumed his duties.

- - -

Mr. Sitler read the paper title, made a motion to discuss and called on the policy initiative sponsor VSO to begin the discussion with an explanation of the need and reasons for submitting the paper.

Mr. Rick Oertel, AL rep, presented the paper: **Income Tax Subtraction for Certain Low-Income 100% Disabled Veterans - OBJECTIVE**: To allow individual income tax subtraction for the amount of annual retirement compensation received service as a member of the U.S. Armed Forces, or the Virginia National Guard, for 100% service-connected disabled veterans with a federally adjusted gross income not exceeding 150% of the federal poverty level for a four-person household. No subtraction would be permitted if another Virginia subtraction or deduction for such service has been claimed.

Mr. Oertel read through the paper, reiterating some of the points made in the paper and noting that they now have a firm estimate of how many veterans in Virginia this will benefit, thanks to the assistance of VA Headquarters staff in Washington, D.C. The estimate is 1,371 veterans may apply for and benefit from the tax exemption.

Vice Chair Taylor called the question. Chairman Wickersham asked the secretary to read the motion for each paper.

Ms. Alford read the motion, “motion to accept **Income Tax Subtraction for Certain Low-Income 100% Disabled Veterans** as a JLC priority for 2019.” Mr. Wickersham made the **motion, seconded** by Mr. Boyer. The motion passed **unanimously**.

- - -

Mr. Sitler read the paper title, made a motion to discuss and called on the policy initiative sponsor VSO to begin the discussion with an explanation of the need and reasons for submitting the paper.

Mr. Bill Ashton, FRA rep, presented the paper: **Removing the Combat Requirement for the Virginia Military Survivors and Dependents Education Program [VMSDEP]** –

OBJECTIVE: To change eligibility for higher education benefits under the Virginia Military Survivors and Dependents Education Program (VMSDEP).

Mr. Ashton read through the paper, reiterating some of the points made in the paper that this would make VMSDEP more equitable by removing the combat requirement for disabled veterans so that those spouses and dependents of veterans who are injured in training missions or other service-connected but not combat related actions or missions would qualify.

As this paper is very familiar with the JLC members there was not much discussion.

Vice Chair Taylor called the question. Chairman Wickersham asked the secretary to read the motion for each paper.

Ms. Alford read the motion, “motion to accept **Removing the Combat Requirement for the Virginia Military Survivors and Dependents Education Program** as a JLC priority for 2019.”

Mr. Wickersham made the **motion, seconded** by Mr. Boyer. The motion passed **unanimously**.

Other New Business and Open Discussion

Chairman Wickersham asked the members to review the Proposed Dates for 2019 at the end of their packets and let him and Ms. Alford know if there were conflicts. The JLC will vote to approve the dates at their 4th Quarter meeting. (*Attachment 11*)

Public Comment

There were no individuals seeking to make public comment.

Adjournment

There being no further business before the Council, the meeting adjourned at 1:30 p.m.

ATTACHMENT 1
Joint Leadership Council of Veterans Service Organizations
American Legion Building
1708 Commonwealth Ave., Richmond VA
July 25, 2018
10:00 a.m. – 1:15 p.m.

REVISED DRAFT AGENDA

- I. Opening and Pledge of Allegiance – *Frank Wickersham, JLC Vice Chairman* (10:00 – 10:05)
- II. Chaplain’s Corner, *Tim Whitmore, JLC Chaplain* (10:05 – 10:10)
- III. Roll call of VSOs, quorum determination, and introduction of guests (10:10 – 10:20)
- IV. Introduction of new JLC member representatives – *Frank Wickersham, JLC Vice Chairman* (10:20 – 10:30)
- V. Approval of Agenda and May 2, 2018 meeting minutes – *Frank Wickersham, JLC Vice Chairman* (10:30 – 10:35)
- VI. JLC Overview/Orientation (10:35 – 11:05) – *Steven Combs, DVS Deputy Commissioner*
- VII. Election of Chair and Vice Chair, *Dan Boyer, JLC Nominations Committee Chair* (11:05 – 11:15)
- VIII. Reports (11:15 – 11:35)
 - a. Board of Veterans Services – *Jim Icenhour, BVS Chairman*
 - b. Veterans Services Foundation – *Frank Finelli, VSF Chairman*
 - c. VMAC, *Bill Barrett, JLC Representative to VMAC*
 - d. Virginia War Memorial Board, *Marie Juliano, JLC Representative to VWMB*
 - e. DVS Report, *John Newby, DVS Commissioner*
 - f. National Guard Report, *Gen. Walt Mercer, Virginia National Guard*
- IX. Update on New Programs, Budget and Legislation as of July 1, *Carrie Ann Alford, DVS Policy Director* (11:35 – 11:55)
- X. Update on DVS Benefits, *Tom Herthel, DVS Benefits Director* (11:55 – 12:15)
- XI. New Business (12:15 – 1:00)
 - a. Follow up on Report of the Constitution and By-Laws Review Committee, *Ace Taylor, Vice Chair of the Constitution & Bylaws committee*
 - b. Introduction of potential initiatives for 2019, *Dave Sitler, JLC Legislative Chair*
 - c. Vote on each proposed initiative to continue forward or be rejected for 2019, *Dave Sitler, JLC Legislative Chair*
 - d. Other New Business and Open Discussion – *Frank Wickersham, JLC Vice Chairman*
- XII. Public comment period (1:00 – 1:10)
- XIII. Closing remarks, Announcement of next meeting – *Frank Wickersham, JLC Vice Chairman* (1:00 – 1:15)
- XIV. Adjourn (1:15)
Lunch to follow

ATTACHMENT 2

*Air Force Association
American Legion
AMVETS
Association of the United
States Army
Disabled American
Veterans
Fifth Baptist Veterans
Ministry
Fleet Reserve Association
Iraq & Afghanistan Veterans
of America
Korean War Veterans
Association
Legion of Valor of the
U.S., Inc.
Marine Corps League
Military Order of the
Purple Heart
Military Officers Association
of America
Military Order of the
World Wars
Navy Mutual Aid Association
Navy Seabee Veterans of
America
Non-Commissioned
Officers Association
Paralyzed Veterans of
America
Reserve Officers Association
Roanoke Valley Veterans
Council
Veterans of Foreign Wars
Vietnam Veterans of America
Virginia Army/Air National
Guard Enlisted
Association
Virginia National Guard
Association
Women Marines Association*

Election of Officers - 2018

Election of officers will be held every year during the regular third quarter meeting. Elections will be by voice vote unless the presiding officer deems a show of hands to be needed.

Elections shall be decided by a majority of the votes cast.

**Candidate for Chair:
Frank G. Wickersham, III
MOAA Rep**

**Candidate for Vice-Chair:
Perry C. “Ace” Taylor
Roanoke Valley Veterans Council Rep**

*Per the JLC Constitution: “Newly elected officers will assume the responsibility of the position to which they were elected at the conclusion of the meeting during which election occurs.”

THEREFORE, Due to the previous chair stepping down at the end of the 2nd Quarter meeting, a motion needs to be made to allow the new chair to assume responsibilities of the position immediately upon election.

ATTACHMENT 3

REPORT TO THE JOINT LEADERSHIP COUNCIL OF VETERANS SERVICE ORGANIZATIONS (JLC) July 25, 2018

The Board of Veterans Services (BVS) has not met since the May 2nd meeting of the JLC. The BVS met last on April 26, 2017 at the Sitter & Barfoot Veterans Care Center in Richmond, VA.

At our April meeting we greeted newly appointed legislator, Delegate Jason Miyares, who represents the 82nd district, which is in Virginia Beach. Newly appointed legislator, Delegate Gordon Helsel, who represents the 91st district, which includes part of the peninsula, was unable to attend. Additionally, two board members who have contributed greatly, Mr. William Haneke and Delegate Chris Stolle, have come to the end of their terms of service and we bid them a fond farewell.

The BVS consists of twenty-two members: fourteen citizen members, five legislators, and three *ex officio* members. Board members are in regular contact with the Department of Veterans Services to provide policy input on key operational issues.

Our next meeting will be at the DVS Henrico office on Thursday, September 6 at 10 a.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Jim Icenhour
Chairman

ATTACHMENT 4

VIRGINIA VETERANS SERVICES FOUNDATION REPORT To The Joint Leadership Council of Veterans Service Organizations July 25, 2018

The Veterans Services Foundation Board of Trustees has held one Board meeting and a Development Committee meeting since the last Joint Leadership Council of Veterans Service Organizations meeting on May 2, 2018. The Veterans Services Foundation Board and the Development Committee all met on June 7, 2018 at the American Legion Department Headquarters in Richmond.

A Development Committee meeting was held prior to the full Board of Trustees meeting. The Development Chairman, Frank Finelli, reported the fundraising plan was going well and all informational marketing materials will be sent to each member. He encouraged each trustee to identify and reach out to past donors as well as potential donors. Fundraising will continue to be a priority for the Foundation.

The Board welcomed a new trustee, Paul Haughton, who was appointed to fill the remaining term of Mr. Bill Lechler.

Secretary Hopkins reported that there are four areas that Governor Northam's administration is focused on and emphasized there are numerous opportunities for the foundation to become more involved: 1). Workforce and Transition, 2). Healthcare, 3). Education and 4). Families. Secretary Hopkins is very interested in Suicide Awareness and Prevention, along with educating the public about this growing problem. Sadly, 22 veterans commit suicide each day nationally. The Secretary would like Virginia to be in the forefront of implementing a successful program to offer assistance and critical resources to prevent any veteran or active military personnel from taking his or her own life.

The Third quarter report ending March 31, 2018 showed that the Veterans Services Foundation had received donations totaling \$493,030.76 with expenditures at \$372,657.84. In an income/expenditure comparison, spanning from 2015 to 2018, it was demonstrated that while donations are down, it was not as significant as originally thought. It also showed an increase in spending of almost 50%. The Virginia Veterans and Family Support (VVFS) remains the largest program supported by the Foundation. This program provides numerous direct services to Veterans and their families along with support for the Homeless program. Fiscal Year 18 closed on June 30, and the year-end financial report will be presented at the August Board meeting.

Elections were conducted and Frank Finelli was elected as the Chairman, Al Pianalto as First Vice Chair and Jack Lanier as Second Vice Chair. The new term for each office started on July 1, 2018.

Rich Schollmann was recognized for his extended term of service as Chairman and his leadership in successfully overseeing the Foundation transition as a separate agency.

The next Veterans Services Foundation Board meeting is scheduled for August 9, 2018 at the Eastern Henrico Workforce Center in Henrico County.

Respectfully submitted,
Frank Finelli
Chairman, Veterans Services Foundation

ATTACHMENT 5

Explanation for Proposed Constitutional Amendment
to Be Voted On at the November 6, 2018, Election

PROPOSED CONSTITUTIONAL AMENDMENT

ARTICLE X. Taxation and Finance.

Section 6-A. Property tax exemption for certain veterans and their surviving spouses and surviving spouses of soldiers killed in action.

BALLOT QUESTION

Shall the real property tax exemption for a primary residence that is currently provided to the surviving spouses of veterans who had a one hundred percent service-connected, permanent, and total disability be amended to allow the surviving spouse to move to a different primary residence and still claim the exemption?

EXPLANATION

Present Law

The Constitution of Virginia currently requires the General Assembly to exempt from taxation the principal place of residence of any veteran who has been determined by the U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs to have a 100 percent service-connected, permanent, and total disability. This tax exemption is also provided to the surviving spouse of such a veteran, so long as the surviving spouse continues to occupy that property as the surviving spouse's principal place of residence.

Proposed Amendment

The proposed amendment would allow the surviving spouse of any veteran who has been determined by the U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs to have a 100 percent service-connected, permanent, and total disability to continue to claim the tax exemption currently provided, even if the surviving spouse moves to a new principal place of residence that is owned by the surviving spouse.

A "yes" vote will allow these surviving spouses to move to a new principal place of residence that is owned by the surviving spouse and still claim the tax exemption.

A "no" vote will not allow such surviving spouses to move and still claim the tax exemption.

FULL TEXT OF AMENDMENT [Proposed new language is underlined. Deleted old language is ~~stricken~~.]

Amend Section 6-A of Article X of the Constitution of Virginia as follows:

ARTICLE X
TAXATION AND FINANCE

Section 6-A. Property tax exemption for certain veterans and their surviving spouses and surviving spouses of soldiers killed in action.

(a) Notwithstanding the provisions of Section 6, the General Assembly by general law, and within the restrictions and conditions prescribed therein, shall exempt from taxation the real property, including the joint real property of husband and wife, of any veteran who has been determined by the United States Department of Veterans Affairs or its successor agency pursuant to federal law to have a one hundred percent service-connected, permanent, and total disability, and who occupies the real property as his or her principal place of residence. The General Assembly shall also provide this exemption from taxation for real property owned by the surviving spouse of a veteran who was eligible for the exemption provided in this subdivision, so long as the surviving spouse does not remarry ~~and continues to occupy the real property as his or her principal place of residence~~. This exemption applies to the surviving spouse's principal place of residence without any restriction on the spouse's moving to a different principal place of residence.

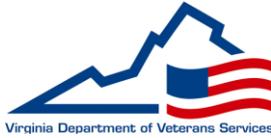
(b) Notwithstanding the provisions of Section 6, the General Assembly by general law, and within the restrictions and conditions prescribed therein, may exempt from taxation the real property of the surviving spouse of any member of the armed forces of the United States who was killed in action as determined by the United States Department of Defense, who occupies the real property as his or her principal place of residence. The exemption under this subdivision shall cease if the surviving spouse remarries and shall not be claimed thereafter. This exemption applies regardless of whether the spouse was killed in action prior to the effective date of this subdivision, but the exemption shall not be applicable for any period of time prior to the effective date. This exemption applies to the surviving spouse's principal place of residence without any restriction on the spouse's moving to a different principal place of residence and without any requirement that the spouse reside in the Commonwealth at the time of death of the member of the armed forces.

DLS

Approved by House and Senate Committees on Privileges and Elections: 04/18/2018

Word Count: 187

ATTACHMENT 6



A copy of our 2017 Annual Report to the Governor and General Assembly with in-depth detail is accessible at:

<https://rga.lis.virginia.gov/Published/2017/RD571/PDF>

Veterans in Virginia: 725,000 Rank: 8th

As a factor of total population – Rank: 4th

Percentage of Women Veterans as a factor of total population – Rank: 1st

From July 1, 2016 – June 30, 2017

- Benefits filed **50,229** disability compensation claims on behalf of Virginia veterans and families, contributing to **\$3.15 Billion** in federal compensation and disability payments to our veterans.
- Virginia Veterans & Family Services delivered **6,764** individual supportive services to veterans and their families, and graduated **30** caregivers in their *Operation Family Caregiver* program.
- Virginia veterans received more than **\$850 Million** in G.I. Bill benefits in FFY16.
- Performed **1,750** burials at Virginia's three state veterans cemeteries.
- Virginia War Memorial hosted **63,990** visitors.
- Entered into a MOU with the DoD to send transitioning service members from Virginia a welcome home letter and a *Virginia Veterans Resource Guide* www.dvs.virginia.gov/vetresourceguide.

The mission of DVS is to serve Virginia's veterans, members of the Virginia National Guard, Virginia residents in the Armed Forces Reserves, and their family members, by ensuring they receive timely transition, employment and education assistance, benefits, health care and long-term care, and the recognition they have earned through service to our country and Commonwealth.

Virginia Values Veterans (V3) Program

- Total V3 Member Companies: 1,211
- State Agencies Certified: 105
- Hires reported as of July 18, 2018: 35,457

Military Medics and Corpsmen Program (MMAC)

- So far in FY19, 31 MMAC Qualified veterans have been hired, and 21 No Medic or Corpsman Left Behind veterans have been hired.
- Partner Healthcare Systems To-Date: Bon Secours, Chesapeake Regional, INOVA, Riverside, VA Dept. of Corrections

Virginia Transition Assistance Program (VTAP)

- So far in FY19, VTAP has a total outreach to 2,893 Transitioning Service Members & veterans and has made 5 installation visits.
- In FY18 VTAP had a total outreach to 58,484 Transitioning Service Members & veterans and made 168 installation visits.

Virginia Veteran and Family Support (VVFS)

- **Homeless Assistance Project's** 14 Continua of Care partners, so far in FY19, have assisted 17 homeless veterans with \$15,067.19 in resources.

- Since October 2014, over 4,000 homeless veterans have been housed in the Commonwealth. Approximately 1,000 were housed in FY18 alone.
- The Annual Point in Time count showed a drop of 48% from 2011 through 2018. 82% of these veterans experiencing homelessness were in shelter. Woman veterans comprised of 13% of the total number.
- Recently the state received an addition 78 HUD VASH vouchers – a critical tool in housing some of our most vulnerable veterans. 40 of these vouchers were allocated to Northern Virginia Homeless Continuums of Care.
- The most recent state budget includes \$200,000 for rapid re-housing resources for veterans through the Dept. of Housing and Community Development. DHCD works in collaboration with the and DVS Homeless Fund. The funds can also serve homeless veterans not eligible for other VA benefits.
- In 2017, VVFS started the Veteran Peer Support (VPS) program to provide veterans with one-on-one peer-based support. Veterans are matched with veterans whose military and post-military experiences are relatable.
- VVFS and Secretariat are both part of the Mayor’s Challenge to Prevent and End Veteran Suicide with the City of Richmond. This initiative is in collaboration with the VA and the Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration (SAMHSA). The interagency team is working on building out strategies to increase outreach of services and streamlining access to care. The strategies developed will be broadened statewide.

Veteran Care Centers - Update on Puller VCC and Jones & Cabacoy VCC

- In design phase – a change in federal design rules allowed DVS to add more beds and program space, but has extended design period approximately eight months
- Project funded by mix of federal/state funds. Federal grant = approximately \$30M
- “Shovel in ground” anticipated for **Summer 2019**
- Opening in **mid-2021**; We will begin accepting applications for admission **early 2021**
- Virginia veterans needing long-term care in the interim are encouraged to apply for admission to the DVS veterans care centers in Richmond and Roanoke.

The basics:

- The new VCCs will be in-patient, residential care facility – not a hospital, medical clinic, or primary care facility.
- It will offer three levels of care: skilled nursing (long-term), secure Alzheimer’s/memory wing (long-term), and rehabilitative (short-term).
- Care will be delivered in a home-like environment. All 128 rooms are private rooms, organized into eight 16-bed “households” with a living room, activity space, and a dining room where meals are served “family style.” In addition, there are indoor and outdoor activity spaces, including enclosed courtyards and exterior walking trails
- The Richmond Wing of our Sitter & Barfoot VCC in Richmond currently has this household style living.
- It will be operated by the Virginia Department of Veterans Services (DVS).

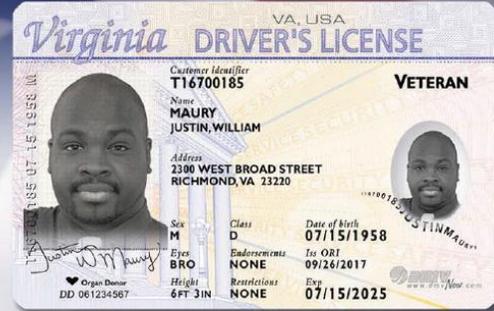
ATTACHMENT 7

Respect and Rewards

For those who served

Add a veteran indicator to your driver's license or ID card

Apply today



A partnership of the Department of Motor Vehicles and the Department of Veterans Services.

Department of  Motor Vehicles

Thousands of Virginia retailers offer veterans discounts and other benefits. You can easily show your veteran status by having an indicator added to your Virginia driver's license or ID card.

To be eligible for the veteran indicator, you must have served in the U.S. Armed Forces and received an honorable discharge; hold an unexpired Virginia driver's license, commercial driver's license, learner's permit or DMV-issued ID card; and present DMV with a copy of a document (or a combination of documents) that indicate branch of service, discharge date, and discharge status. For full eligibility requirements, visit www.dmvNOW.com/veteranindicator.

You will receive your new Virginia driver's license or ID card with the veteran indicator in the mail about a week after you submit your discharge documentation.

For information on resources available to Virginia veterans, review the Virginia Veterans Resource Guide developed by the Department of Veterans Services on their website at www.dvs.virginia.gov.



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Department of  Motor Vehicles

ATTACHMENT 8



VSA 10D (07-27-2017)

LICENSE PLATE DEVELOPMENT PREORDER REQUEST

PURPOSE: Customers use this form to pre-order license plates in development.
INSTRUCTIONS: Carefully review Section 1. Complete Sections 2 through 4 and submit with the appropriate payment to the License Plate Sponsor in Section 1.

IMPORTANT INFORMATION	
License plate development should be complete within 9 months after the license plate sponsor, in Section 1, submits the preorder applications, payment, and official design to DMV.	

SECTION 1. LICENSE PLATE SPONSOR		DMV USE
Submit application and fees to: Virginia Department of Veterans Services ATTENTION: Karen Gordwin P.O. Box 5113 Woodbridge, VA 22194 CONTACT PHONE: (713) 614-3049 ♦ EMAIL: licenseplates@womenvet.com		
Make check/money order payable to: Karen Gordwin		
LICENSE PLATE CERTIFICATION REQUIREMENTS (if applicable) None	PLATE NAME I Support Women Veterans	PROPOSED PLATE DESIGN
NON PERSONALIZED PLATE COST: \$25.00		PERSONALIZED PLATE COST: \$35.00

SECTION 2. VEHICLE REGISTRATION INFORMATION			
Enter ONE of the following:	LAST 4 DIGITS OF VEHICLE IDENTIFICATION NUMBER (VIN) <input style="width: 40px;" type="text"/>	OR	VEHICLE TITLE NUMBER <input style="width: 90%;"/>
OWNER'S FULL LEGAL NAME (last, first, mi, suffix) OR BUSINESS NAME (if business owned) <input style="width: 95%;" type="text"/>		TELEPHONE NUMBER <input style="width: 40px;" type="text"/> (<input style="width: 20px;" type="text"/>) <input style="width: 30px;" type="text"/>	
CO-OWNER'S FULL LEGAL NAME (last, first, mi, suffix) <input style="width: 95%;" type="text"/>		TELEPHONE NUMBER <input style="width: 40px;" type="text"/> (<input style="width: 20px;" type="text"/>) <input style="width: 30px;" type="text"/>	
OWNER'S RESIDENCE/HOME/BUSINESS ADDRESS (Apt # if applicable) <input style="width: 50%;" type="text"/>	CITY <input style="width: 20%;" type="text"/>	STATE <input style="width: 20%;" type="text"/>	ZIP CODE <input style="width: 10%;" type="text"/>

SECTION 3. LICENSE PLATE INFORMATION			
CURRENT PLATE NUMBER <input style="width: 80%;" type="text"/>	EXPIRATION DATE (mm/dd/yyyy) <input style="width: 60%;" type="text"/>	PLATE TYPE (see your vehicle registration) <input style="width: 90%;" type="text"/>	IS THIS A DISABLED PLATE? <input type="checkbox"/> YES <input type="checkbox"/> NO
(check one)			
A. <input type="checkbox"/> TRANSFER MY EXISTING LICENSE PLATE NUMBER (Annual personalized plate fees apply)			
B. <input type="checkbox"/> NEW PERSONALIZED LICENSE PLATE NUMBER (Annual personalized plate fees apply)			
1st <input style="width: 20px;" type="text"/>	2nd <input style="width: 20px;" type="text"/>	3rd <input style="width: 20px;" type="text"/>	4th <input style="width: 20px;" type="text"/>
C. <input type="checkbox"/> DO NOT PERSONALIZE (Standard production number will be issued)			
NOTE: Please review DMV's guidelines regarding personalized plates on page 2 of this form			

SECTION 4. CERTIFICATION	
I/We certify that (check one):	
<input type="checkbox"/> This vehicle is insured by a liability policy issued through an insurance company licensed to do business in Virginia and it will remain insured while registered, whether or not it is operated. Penalties are severe for violation of this requirement.	
<input type="checkbox"/> This vehicle is not insured. I have either paid the applicable uninsured motor vehicle fee for the vehicle for the requested registration period or I understand that DMV will require me to pay the fee prior to the processing of this Preorder Request. (This fee provides no insurance coverage.) A vehicle must be insured with liability coverage when it is registered, and it must remain insured while registered, whether or not it is operated, or the uninsured motor vehicle fee must be paid. Penalties are severe for violation of this requirement.	
I/We further certify and affirm that all information presented in this form is true and correct, that any documents I/we have presented to DMV are genuine, and that the information included in all supporting documentation is true and accurate. I/We make this certification and affirmation under penalty of perjury and I/we understand that knowingly making a false statement or representation on this form is a criminal violation.	
For a corporation, an authorized representative must sign.	
VEHICLE OWNER SIGNATURE <input style="width: 95%;" type="text"/>	DATE (mm/dd/yyyy) <input style="width: 80%;" type="text"/>
VEHICLE OWNER SIGNATURE <input style="width: 95%;" type="text"/>	DATE (mm/dd/yyyy) <input style="width: 80%;" type="text"/>

ATTACHMENT 9



Virginia National Guard Association
and
Virginia Army/Air National Guard Enlisted Association



To the Joint Leadership Council,

We write to you as two separate veteran's service organizations with shared legislative objectives for 2019. As The Virginia National Guard Association and Virginia Army/Air National Guard Enlisted Association, we aim to serve the needs of all Virginia National Guard officer and enlisted members, both active and retired.

The two enclosed initiatives represent the current legislative priorities for the Virginia National Guard and The Adjutant General of Virginia. Our two respective organizations stand behind these initiatives completely, and believe that they will have untold impact on morale, force structure, and economic impact within the Commonwealth. Thank you for your thoughtful consideration of our proposals.

SEYMOUR.NATHAN.JAMES.12
N.JAMES.1257676
745

Major Nate Seymour
President
Virginia National Guard Association

WHITE.CLIFFTON.CARTER.1049876
684
RTER.1049876684

Command Sergeant Major Cliff White
President
Virginia Army/Air National Guard Enlisted Association

ATTACHMENT 10



101 N. 14TH ST, 17TH FLOOR
RICHMOND VA 23219

*Air Force Association
American Legion
AMVETS
Association of the United States Army
Disabled American Veterans
Fifth Baptist Veterans Ministry
Fleet Reserve Association
Iraq & Afghanistan Veterans of America
Korean War Veterans Association
Legion of Valor of the U.S., Inc.
Marine Corps League
Military Order of the Purple Heart
Military Officers Association of America
Military Order of the World Wars
Navy Mutual Aid Association
Navy Seabee Veterans of America
Non-Commissioned Officers Association
Paralyzed Veterans of America
Reserve Officers Association
Roanoke Valley Veterans Council
Veterans of Foreign Wars
Vietnam Veterans of America
Virginia Army/Air National Guard Enlisted Association
Virginia National Guard Association
Women Marines Association*

DATE

JLC Contact
VNGA & VaANGA
Kevin Hoffman
hoffman931@gmail.com

Robert Barnette
r.barnette55@gmail.com

COMMONWEALTH OF VIRGINIA JOINT LEADERSHIP COUNCIL OF VETERANS SERVICE ORGANIZATIONS

Position Paper 2019-XX Increased State Active Duty (SAD) Pay

OBJECTIVE: To raise minimum State Active Duty (SAD) pay to the equivalent of a service member with the rank of E-6 (Staff Sergeant) with 18 years of service, which is currently just over \$125 per day.

BACKGROUND:

- a. During state emergencies, Guardsmen are brought onto SAD as temporary state employees at a very low pay band.
- b. Other state employees involved in emergency response work overtime and go home or to a hotel, however, Guardsmen on SAD are not eligible for overtime pay, put in 12-18 hours per day, and are typically quartered in austere conditions such as an armory or tent.
- c. Since January 2014, the VNG has mobilized nearly 2,570 personnel on state active duty to respond to hurricanes, winter storms and flooding.

DISCUSSION:

- a. During the Charlottesville "Unite the Right" Protests in August 2017, Guardsmen stood side-by-side to Virginia State Police in extremely stressful and challenging conditions, and were woefully undercompensated compared to the state police.
- b. Guardsmen often lose pay when responding to state active duty, and are forced to use vacation time or take leave without pay. Most employers do not supplement the pay difference. Guardsmen are often only 12 hours to report for SAD.
- c. State active duty pay amounts are determined by DOD pay tables. An E-1 VNG Soldier/Airman earns about \$89.75 per day, before taxes, which on a 12-hour equals \$7.48 per hour - less than the federal minimum wage.
- d. It's essential that Guardsmen are compensated at a reasonable rate, at least comparable to minimum wage, with a set pay floor.
- e. It is essential to promote a positive work environment when conducting SAD missions to send the message to Guardsmen that their efforts are valued equally to other emergency response agencies.

RECOMMENDATION: That the Governor and General Assembly appropriate \$50,000, in order to assure all Virginia National Guardsmen are paid at least at the E6 rate.

THE 25 ORGANIZATIONS OF THE JOINT LEADERSHIP COUNCIL HAVE MORE THAN 250,000 MEMBERS



COMMONWEALTH OF VIRGINIA JOINT LEADERSHIP COUNCIL OF VETERANS SERVICE ORGANIZATIONS

101 N. 14TH ST, 17TH FLOOR
RICHMOND VA 23219

*Air Force Association
American Legion
AMVETS
Association of the United
States Army
Disabled American
Veterans
Fifth Baptist Veterans
Ministry
Fleet Reserve Association
Iraq & Afghanistan Veterans
of America
Korean War Veterans
Association
Legion of Valor of the
U.S., Inc.
Marine Corps League
Military Order of the
Purple Heart
Military Officers Association
of America
Military Order of the
World Wars
Navy Mutual Aid Association
Navy Seabee Veterans of
America
Non-Commissioned
Officers Association
Paralyzed Veterans of
America
Reserve Officers Association
Roanoke Valley Veterans
Council
Veterans of Foreign Wars
Vietnam Veterans of America
Virginia Army/Air National
Guard Enlisted
Association
Virginia National Guard
Association
Women Marines Association*

DATE

JLC Contact
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Position Paper 2019-xx Free Tuition for Virginia National Guardsmen

OBJECTIVE: To offer free tuition to Virginia National Guardsmen at accredited Virginia colleges and universities, including community colleges, trade schools, and for-profit certification programs.

BACKGROUND:

- The Virginia National Guard may miss end strength goals for the first time in more than a decade. National Guard leadership in Washington, D.C. made it clear that states who fail to meet strength goals will begin to lose force structure.
- VNG is losing recruits and current Virginia Guardsmen to surrounding states who offer free college tuition, including North Carolina, Tennessee, and Pennsylvania.
- Current VNG tuition assistance benefit comes with a 2-year service obligation to the Virginia National Guard, and benefit is about \$8,000 in state tuition assistance.

DISCUSSION:

- The Virginia National Guard has a significant presence and economic impact to the Commonwealth, with facilities in over 40 communities, valued at \$253M. VNG maintains \$1.8B in equipment for state emergency response and federal training. And, VNG brings in more than \$250M in annual income, not including benefits.
- Loss of force structure means loss of equipment, facilities, and personnel dollars to the Commonwealth, and lost opportunity to pursue increased force structure, which is a current priority for The Adjutant General.
- VNG is the tip of the spear with regard to cutting edge weapons systems and force structure, and are positioned to grow even more, but cannot do so without meeting end strength goals.
- The additional money spent on state tuition assistance comes back to Virginia through additional funds spent at Virginia's colleges, universities, and other continuing education courses, increased salaries (higher tax brackets), and most importantly not only skilled soldiers but skilled workers participating in Virginia's economy.
- Free tuition serves as a strong recruiting and retention incentive. Since Guardsmen are less transient than active duty, they are much more likely to go to school, work, live, shop, and enjoy leisure activities within the Commonwealth, and most settle permanently in Virginia.

RECOMMENDATION: That the Governor and General Assembly provide budget support of approximately a \$1 million increase in the annual State Tuition Assistance program for a pilot program to cover the estimated 3.5% of Guardsmen seeking a degree who are not currently completely covered by federal and state tuition assistance.

THE 25 ORGANIZATIONS OF THE JOINT LEADERSHIP COUNCIL HAVE MORE THAN 250,000 MEMBERS



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Reserve Officers Association
Roanoke Valley Veterans Council
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Vietnam Veterans of America
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Virginia National Guard Association
Women Marines Association

DATE, 2019

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Position Paper 2019-XX
Personal Property Tax Relief for Certain Disabled Veterans

OBJECTIVE: To create a unified, cohesive, state-wide system for personal property tax relief to certain disabled veterans.

BACKGROUND:

- Virginia currently has a patchwork system among localities with regards to personal property tax relief and exemptions.
- Counties and Independent Cities around the state have varying rules around which veterans qualify and how much relief – partial or full – the veteran can receive.
- This is creating confusion among veterans who move from one locality with personal property tax relief to a new locality that does not.
- The Disabled American Veterans (DAV), Department of Virginia has passed resolutions at the past two state conferences (Res 10, Res 19) calling for personal property tax exemption for one vehicle for veterans who qualify for the real property tax exemption.
- There is currently no minimum rating requirement for Virginia veterans to receive the “Disabled Veteran” plate from the DMV. DAV is supportive of tying the exemption to the DV plate only if the additional requirements of meeting the real property tax exemption are also in place.

DISCUSSION:

- In 2017, various Commissioners of the Revenue and other assessing officials were informally polled on this topic, and they are supportive as long as there are parameters the same as or similar to the real property tax exemption so that it is easy for their offices to administer this second exemption.
- As a Commonwealth, we should have uniform policies and tax exemptions across the state and not a patchwork where a veteran can lose an important benefit if they move to a new locality.
- This is another way to support low-income veterans who often risk losing their vehicle due to late payments and fines. 100% SC, total and permanently disabled veterans, as rated by the U.S. Dept. of Veterans Affairs, qualify for real property tax exemption in Virginia and exempting one vehicle as well would be an additional financial assistance to these veterans.
- The legislation would need to supercede current regulations passed at the county and city level to create one systematic, statewide policy for personal property tax exemptions.

RECOMMENDATION: That the Governor and General Assembly approve a standardized, statewide personal property tax exemption for 100% service-connected, total and permanent disabled veterans, to be administered by the localities.

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DATE, 2019

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Position Paper 2019-xx
Protection from malicious bodily injury to Armed Forces

OBJECTIVE: To ensure protection from malicious, and increasingly common, bodily injury to, or pointing of laser at, members of United States Armed Forces.

BACKGROUND:

1. The reportable incidences of intentional lasing of military (and civilian) aircraft and surface-based vehicles (automobiles, trucks, trains, ships) is increasing dramatically. Between 2014 and 2017, the number of lasing incidents reported to the FAA nearly doubled from 3,894 to 7,703. (source *LaserPointerSafety.com*; 18 Jan 2018 -- Categories: Aviation incidents | Statistics | Eye effect or injury | SLA news)
2. Laser pointers can cause glare, afterimage, flash blindness or temporary loss of night vision, all causing a great danger to the crew, operator or victim.
3. The potential for permanent eye damage and/or visual impairment to military service members, National Guard and Reserves, as well as contractors, is real and increases with each incident/event with a laser.
4. The U.S. Coast Guard recently reported a lasing incident directed at a rescue helicopter in the midst of a real-world rescue mission. (source, *The Maritime Executive*; By MarEx 2017-05-04 17:51:41)

DISCUSSION:

1. With the ever-growing number of lasing incidents directed at aircraft, unfortunately it is only a matter of time before a Virginia service member is injured by such a device.
2. Legislation is needed to add members of the United States Armed Forces, Virginia National Guard and Reserves, and contractors working with the military in Virginia, to the list of persons the malicious or unlawful wounding of whom, or the pointing of a laser at whom, is subject to an enhanced penalty.
3. Legislation should make it a criminal offense and carry a Class 6 felony penalty, based on incident and if the perpetrator is a known repeat offender, to deter such actions.

RECOMMENDATION:

That the Governor and General Assembly pass legislation banning pointing lasers at military aircraft and surface-based vehicles, with a Class 6 Felony penalty of up to 1 year imprisonment and a fine of up to \$2,500.

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Dec. 20, 2017

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Position Paper 2019-xx

Phased-in System for Partial State Tax Exemption for Military Retirement Income

OBJECTIVE: To reform the Virginia state tax law, creating a phased in system to exempt a portion of military retirement income beginning in 2019.

BACKGROUND:

- Currently Virginia does not exempt military retirement income, while three of Virginia's neighbors (NC, WV, MD) have some level of state tax exemption on military retirement income.
- The personal income tax laws of over half the states provides various exclusions from gross income in determining tax liability, including an exclusion for combat-related special compensation and death benefit payments received by a surviving spouse or other beneficiary designated by a military veteran.

DISCUSSION:

- The qualifying retirement income must be received as a result of an honorable discharge and retirement from full-time, active-duty service in the armed forces of the United States, or reserve components thereof, including the National Guard.
- For each taxable year beginning on or after January 1, 2019 gross income shall not include a percentage of qualified military retirement income received by qualified taxpayers. The phased in system would:
 - a. Beginning in 2019: A military retiree, or their spouse, may subtract 25% of their military retirement income from federally adjusted gross income before determining Virginia tax.
 - b. Beginning in 2021: A military retiree, or their spouse, may subtract 50% of their military retirement income from federally adjusted gross income before determining Virginia tax.
 - c. Beginning in 2023: A military retiree, or their spouse, may subtract 75% of their military retirement income from federally adjusted gross income before determining Virginia tax.
 - d. Beginning in 2025: A military retiree, or their spouse, may subtract 100% of their military retirement income from federally adjusted gross income before determining Virginia tax.
- Non-military income, including all income derived from federal or military contracts, consulting or full-time employment will be taxed at the full gross income percentages.

RECOMMENDATION: That the Governor and General Assembly support changes to the current Virginia tax laws for a phased in system to eventually eliminate state tax on military retirement income.

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Position Paper 2019-xx
Electronic Return of Voted Ballots by Overseas Military

OBJECTIVE: Enfranchise Virginia's Overseas Uniformed Service Personnel's votes by enacting Electronic Return of Voted Absentee Ballots by encrypted means or through special secure web access portal, as a pilot program.

BACKGROUND:

- a. Currently an overseas voter can electronically register and receive an absentee ballot per the Uniformed and Overseas Citizens Absentee Voting Act (UOCAVA). By current Virginia Code the ballot must be returned via "snail" mail.
- b. Mail from overseas is subject to delays when returned by "snail" mail. Many votes are not counted due to ballots reaching local registrars after Election Day, if at all.
- c. For 2010-2014 general elections, deployed Virginians requested 5,050 ballots, of which 2,231 (44%) were returned by mail or in person in time to be counted, 134 ballots were rejected and not counted, and 2,675 (53%) were not returned.
- d. In 2018, Senate Bill 559 passed the Senate, but was tabled in the House.

DISCUSSION:

- a. Vice-Chair, Dr. Clara Belle Wheeler, from the State Board of Elections, has expressed confidence in ability to develop procedures to address privacy and security concerns related to transmission, counting and management of electronic return of voted absentee overseas-deployed military ballots.
- b. Virginia is one of only 19 states that do not offer any kind of electronic return for its resident military members deployed overseas.
- c. In 2018, Everyone Counts a U.S. founded and owned encrypted voting software company provided a Rough Order of Magnitude Cost Projection to install a secure pilot test program statewide for \$400,000 if run state-wide, but a limited pilot can be done for \$100,000. The company's software is platform independent and encrypted to secure the integrity of the submitted ballots.
- d. As indicated by the National Association of Counties, the Fiscal Year 2018 Federal Omnibus Spending bill 2018 allocated millions of dollars in grants to states for election cybersecurity.

RECOMMENDATION: That the Governor and General Assembly enact legislation and provide budget support of a pilot program at the Virginia State Board of Elections for \$100,000 and funding for one FTE, for the electronic return of absentee ballots by Virginia's deployed military service members.

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Position Paper 2019-xx

Income Tax Subtraction for Certain Low-Income 100% Disabled Veterans

OBJECTIVE: To allow individual income tax subtraction for the amount of annual retirement compensation received service as a member of the U.S. Armed Forces, or the Virginia National Guard, for 100% service-connected disabled veterans with a federally adjusted gross income not exceeding 150% of the federal poverty level for a four-person household. No subtraction would be permitted if another Virginia subtraction or deduction for such service has been claimed.

BACKGROUND:

- Virginia currently allows qualifying taxpayers to claim a subtraction for up to \$20,000 of disability income, any disabled veterans who already claim this subtraction would not qualify for the new program, or would have to drop this subtraction and claim the new one.
- 14 states with an income tax exempt military retirement pay. Virginia's neighbors:
 - D.C. and Maryland offer exemptions ranging from \$3,000 to \$5,000.
 - North Carolina offers a full exemption for retirees with five years of service as of August 12, 1989; otherwise, retirees may claim a deduction of up to \$4,000.
 - Kentucky offers exemptions of \$41,110 and West Virginia \$20,000.

DISCUSSION:

- While Combat-Related Special Compensation (CRSC) is not subject to federal or Virginia taxation, Concurrent Retirement and Disability Payments (CRDP) are generally subject to both federal and Virginia taxation.
- Available reports do not provide specific data on the exact number of 100% service-connected disabled veterans in Virginia, however, the VA has given a reasonable estimate of 1,371 disabled Virginia veterans who would qualify for this benefit.
- Department of Taxation considers implementation of this bill as routine, and does not require additional funding.

RECOMMENDATION: That the Governor and General Assembly approve an individual income tax subtraction for 100% service-connected disabled veterans with a federally adjusted gross income, not exceeding 150% of the federal poverty level for a four-person household, who have not already claimed another exemption.

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Position Paper 2019-xx

Removing the Combat Requirement for the Virginia Military Survivors and Dependents Education Program [VMSDEP]

1. **OBJECTIVE:** To change eligibility for higher education benefits under the Virginia Military Survivors and Dependents Education Program (VMSDEP).
2. **BACKGROUND:**
 - a. The VMSDEP, formally known as the War Orphans Education Program, provides education benefits to spouses and children of military service members killed, missing in action, taken prisoner, or who became at least 90 percent disabled as a result of military service in an armed conflict.
 - b. Military service includes service in the United States Armed Forces, United States Armed Forces Reserves, and the Virginia National Guard.
 - c. Armed conflict includes military operations against terrorism or as the result of a terrorist act, a peace-keeping mission, or any armed conflict after Dec. 6, 1941.
 - d. Under VMSDEP, tuition and required fees are waived at Virginia public colleges and universities.
 - e. Students may also receive a stipend of up to \$1,800 per year toward the cost of room, board, books, and supplies. The amount of the stipend is dependent on the amount of funding appropriated (\$1,930,000 in FY16), the number of enrolled students, and their enrollment status.
 - f. Benefits are available for up to four years or the equivalent.
3. **DISCUSSION:**
 - a. Under current law, the veteran's 90% disability rating must have incurred during military operations against terrorism, on a peacekeeping mission, as a result of a terrorist act, or in any armed conflict.
 - b. In 2015, DVS denied 502 applicants due to the combat requirement.
 - c. The 2016 FIS for SB528 estimated the proposed legislation would result in a system-wide loss of tuition revenue of \$2,182,454 in FY17 and \$2,520,734 in FY18.
 - d. This is a potentially significant fiscal impact on higher education institutions, and additional general fund support may need to be appropriated to offset this loss of revenue. Evaluation may show whether funding from other programs such as the Virginia Tuition Assistance Grant Program and the Virginia Community College Tuition Grant for Foster Care could potentially offset the increased cost to VMSDEP.
4. **RECOMMENDATION:** That the Governor and General Assembly remove the requirement that a veteran's disability rating be combat related and within an armed conflict. Instead, a permanent, service-connected disability rating of at least 90%, plus satisfaction of the other requirements currently in the Code, would qualify a veteran's spouse or child for VMSDEP benefits.

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ATTACHMENT 11

Proposed Meeting Dates
2019

Wednesday, April 17
Place: TBD

Wednesday, July 24
Place: TBD

Wednesday, October 16
Place: TBD

Wednesday, December 18
Place: TBD