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Egolf Bill to Give Special Commission Advisory Role to AMVETS Executive Director Is Sent to Governor

Enactment of the bill would give AMVETS executive director non-voting advisory membership on Veterans' Commission

HARRISBURG – The state House today unanimously approved and sent to the governor legislation sponsored by Rep. Allan Egolf (R-86) that adds the executive director of AMVETS to the State Veterans' Commission as a non-voting advisory member.

“This bill recognizes the growing importance of this fine veterans organization,” said Egolf. “The commission has worked for this bill for a long time.”

Under current law, the state adjutants of the American Legion, the Veterans of Foreign Wars (VFW) and the Disabled American Veterans (DAV) are afforded non-voting advisory memberships in addition to regular voting membership.

“The membership of AMVETS has significantly increased over the years and now totals 16,000 in Pennsylvania,” Egolf said. “They deserve the same representation that is currently afforded to the larger American Legion, VFW and DAV.

“The AMVETS do have a voting member on the commission (the state commander),” he said. “We are simply adding the executive director to the ranks of the non-voting advisory membership.”

Egolf said the measure in no way affects the AMVETS voting privileges.

AMVETS membership is open to all men and women who have served honorably any time after Sept. 15, 1940, or are currently serving in the U.S. Armed Forces, Reserves or National Guard.

Founded in 1943, AMVETS, which stands for "American Veterans," is one of the most recently organized veterans groups.

The State Veterans' Commission is an advisory body, created by the General Assembly, within the Department of Military and Veterans Affairs.

Egolf is vice-chairman of the House Committee on Veterans Affairs and Emergency Preparedness where the bill was first considered.

Egolf's measure was originally passed by the House on June 5. The Senate passed the bill on Oct. 4 by a vote of 48-0.

The legislation was also amended with a provision that affords employers the option to pay employees who are members of the National Guard or military reserves and are called to war.

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AMVETS

American Veterans

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July 5, 2000

**Commonwealth of Pennsylvania
PA House of Representatives
Military Veterans Affairs and Emergency
Preparedness Committee
Harrisburg, PA 17120**

Dear Representative:

Enclosed with this letter is a Resolution that was passed unanimously at our 55th Annual Department Convention in Allentown, Pennsylvania, June 24, 2000. AMVETS is the fourth largest Veterans Organization in Pennsylvania and is continuing to grow. The AMVETS feel that this is the direction our Commonwealth should be heading toward and asks that you support any legislation that would create a separate Department of Veterans Affairs.

Yours In AMVETS,

Gary L. Reph
Executive Director

E. James Lamison
Commander

AMVETS DEPARTMENT OF PENNSYLVANIA
55th ANNUAL DEPARTMENT CONVENTION
ALLENTOWN HILTON
ALLENTOWN, PA
JUNE 23-25, 2000

RESOLUTION # 2003

Approved/Disapproved by Convention

WHEREAS: with the addition of the Delaware Valley Nursing Home now being a reality; and

WHEREAS: there will be a total of six State Veterans Homes in Pennsylvania; and

WHEREAS: with Scotland School For Veterans Children now being placed under the administration of the Department of Military and Veterans Affairs; and

WHEREAS: there is a bill pending in the State Legislature asking that the Governors' Outreach and Assistance Centers be placed under the administration of the Department of Military and Veterans Affairs; and

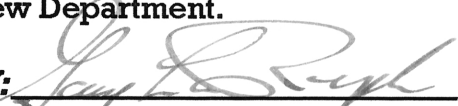
WHEREAS: there are more benefits accorded to the Blinded Veterans and Disabled Veterans in their monthly stipend by the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania; and

WHEREAS: because of all these additions to the workload of the DMVA that there is a definite need for the formation of a separate Department of Veterans Affairs; now therefore be it

RESOLVED: That The AMVETS, Department of Pennsylvania meeting in regular convention session at the 55th Annual Department Convention in Allentown, PA on June 23-25, 2000 urge the Pennsylvania General Assembly to create a Department of Veterans Affairs; and be it further

RESOLVED: That a copy of this resolution be sent to each member of the State Senate Military and Veterans Affairs Committee and to the House Military Veterans Affairs and Emergency Preparedness Committee urging them to prepare the necessary bill to create this new Department.

SUBMITTED BY:


Gary L. Reph, Executive Director/Chairmen Legislative Committee

APPROVED REJECTED REFERRED FILED