



S.F. No. 1959 – Veterans omnibus bill (as proposed to be modified by the A-2 amendment)

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Date: April 4, 2025

Article 1 Appropriations

Sections 2 and 3 appropriate money for operations of the Department of Military Affairs and the Department of Veterans Affairs and for other expenditures specified on the spreadsheet prepared by Andrew Erickson, Fiscal Analyst with the Office of Senate Counsel, Research, and Fiscal Analysis.

Article 2 Veterans Policy

Section 1 (13.461, subd. 27) amends the data practices act to reflect the proposed amendment to section 197.065 in **Section 3**.

Section 2 (193.143) increases the total aggregate bond debt the State Armory Building Commission can carry at any one time from \$15 to \$45 million.

Section 3 (197.065) permits the staff of the Department of Veterans Affairs (“MDVA”) to access the MAXIS database to verify the eligibility of applicants in connection with additional programs, including the Veterans Stable Housing Initiative and programs administered by the Veterans Programs division. MAXIS is a database that is used by state and county workers to determine eligibility for public assistance and health care.

Sections 4 and 5 (197.236, subdivision 8 and 9) make technical changes to the eligibility requirements for burial in State Veterans Cemeteries to reference the specific federal statute that determines federal burial eligibility. MDVA currently uses the federal definition to determine eligibility, and this change aligns state law with department practice.

Section 6 (197.608, subdivision 6) increases the annual grant amount that can be made to the Minnesota Association of County Veterans Services Officers, and provides parameters for the use of a portion of the grant.

Section 7 (197.6091) requires a person who assists with veterans benefit claims or appeals for compensation to be accredited by the federal government and to comply with certain other requirements.

Sections 8 (197.75, subd. 1) and 9 (197.791, subd. 4) amends the statute providing educational benefits to the surviving spouse of a deceased veteran to permit the surviving spouse to continue accessing the benefit regardless of the whether the surviving spouse remarries. Current MDVA rules provide that, if a surviving spouse remarries, the spouse is no longer eligible for this benefit.

Section 10 directs the Minnesota Department of Administration to place a memorial plaque in the court of honor on the State Capitol grounds recognizing Gold Star and Blue Star families.



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