

Senate File 2466 - Introduced

SENATE FILE 2466

BY COMMITTEE ON APPROPRIATIONS

(SUCCESSOR TO SF 2282)

(SUCCESSOR TO SSB 3079)

A BILL FOR

1 An Act relating to veterans services and making appropriations.

2 BE IT ENACTED BY THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF THE STATE OF IOWA:

1 Section 1. NEW SECTION. 35.4 Power of attorney.

2 The provisions of this chapter and chapters 35A, 35B,
3 35C, and 35D do not limit the ability of a veterans' service
4 organization recognized pursuant to 38 C.F.R. §14.628(c) to
5 represent a veteran in the United States department of veterans
6 affairs benefit claims process or to be granted the power of
7 attorney for a veteran with the United States department of
8 veterans affairs. A veteran may grant a veterans' service
9 organization that is recognized pursuant to 38 C.F.R.
10 §14.628(c) power of attorney for the purposes of filing claims
11 with the United States department of veterans affairs.

12 Sec. 2. Section 35A.5, subsection 6, paragraph b,
13 subparagraph (2), Code 2026, is amended to read as follows:

14 (2) All ~~funds~~ moneys received by the department for the
15 purposes established in subparagraph (1) shall be deposited
16 in the county ~~commission of veteran affairs training~~ veterans
17 services excellence training program and administration account
18 established in [section 35A.16, subsection 4](#).

19 Sec. 3. Section 35A.5, subsection 9, Code 2026, is amended
20 to read as follows:

21 9. Verify each executive director and administrator of a
22 county commission of veteran affairs ~~is fully qualified to work~~
23 ~~in the person's position. Qualifications include but are not~~
24 ~~limited to~~ has all of the following credentials:

25 a. The person has obtained certification that is federally
26 required for the executive director's or administrator's
27 position within twelve months of beginning the person's
28 employment.

29 b. The person has obtained a personal identification
30 verification card necessary to access the veterans benefits
31 management system within twelve months of beginning the
32 person's employment.

33 c. The person maintains certification that is federally
34 required for the executive director's or administrator's
35 position.

1 *d.* The person maintains an active personal identification
2 verification card and has access to the veterans benefits
3 management system.

4 *e.* The person is ~~proficient in the use of electronic~~
5 ~~mail, general computer use, and use of the internet to access~~
6 ~~information regarding facilities, benefits, and services~~
7 ~~available to veterans and their families in compliance with~~
8 education and training standards established by the commandant.

9 Sec. 4. Section 35A.5, Code 2026, is amended by adding the
10 following new subsections:

11 NEW SUBSECTION. 16A. Establish and maintain a statewide
12 standardized electronic claim system to be used by county
13 veterans service offices for submission of all United States
14 department of veterans affairs claims.

15 NEW SUBSECTION. 16B. Communicate county veterans service
16 office performance metrics to county commissions of veteran
17 affairs and boards of supervisors through quarterly reports.

18 Sec. 5. Section 35A.13, subsection 5, Code 2026, is amended
19 to read as follows:

20 5. *a.* For each fiscal year that the balance of the trust
21 fund on July 1 is below fifty seventy-five million dollars,
22 the interest and earnings on moneys in the fund and the first
23 five hundred thousand dollars transferred pursuant to section
24 99G.39 from the lottery fund are appropriated to the commission
25 to be used to achieve the purposes of subsection 8. Moneys
26 appropriated to the commission under this paragraph that remain
27 unencumbered or unobligated at the end of the fiscal year shall
28 revert to the fund.

29 ~~*b.* For each fiscal year that the balance of the trust fund~~
30 ~~on July 1 is above fifty million dollars but the balance of the~~
31 ~~fund was below fifty million dollars on July 1 of the previous~~
32 ~~fiscal year, moneys transferred pursuant to section 99G.39 from~~
33 ~~the lottery fund are appropriated to the commission to be used~~
34 ~~to achieve the purposes of subsection 8. Moneys appropriated~~
35 ~~to the commission under this paragraph that remain unencumbered~~

1 ~~or unobligated at the end of the fiscal year shall revert to~~
2 ~~the fund.~~

3 ~~c. For each fiscal year that the balance of the trust fund~~
4 ~~on July 1 is above fifty million dollars and the balance of~~
5 ~~the fund was above fifty million dollars on July 1 of the~~
6 ~~previous fiscal year, moneys equal to the net income the fund~~
7 ~~received in the previous fiscal year are appropriated to the~~
8 ~~commission to be used to achieve the purposes of subsection~~
9 ~~8. Moneys appropriated to the commission under this paragraph~~
10 ~~that remain unencumbered or unobligated at the end of the~~
11 ~~fiscal year shall revert to the fund. For the purposes of this~~
12 ~~paragraph, "income" means moneys credited to the veterans trust~~
13 ~~fund pursuant to [subsection 2](#) and moneys transferred pursuant~~
14 ~~to [section 99G.39](#).~~

15 ~~d. b.~~ Notwithstanding ~~paragraphs~~ paragraph "a", "b", and
16 "e", moneys credited to the war orphans educational assistance
17 account shall be expended as provided in [subsection 9](#).

18 ~~e. c.~~ Notwithstanding ~~paragraphs~~ paragraph "a", "b",
19 and "e", moneys transferred under [subsection 6](#) to the county
20 ~~commission of veteran affairs training~~ veterans services
21 excellence training program and administration account shall be
22 expended as provided in [section 35A.16](#).

23 Sec. 6. Section 35A.13, subsection 6, Code 2026, is amended
24 to read as follows:

25 6. For the fiscal year beginning July 1, 2024 2026, and
26 for each subsequent fiscal year, there is transferred to the
27 ~~county commission of veteran affairs training~~ veterans services
28 excellence training program and administration account of
29 the county ~~commissions of veteran affairs~~ veterans services
30 excellence fund created in [section 35A.16](#), from the moneys
31 transferred pursuant to [section 99G.39](#) from the lottery fund to
32 the veterans trust fund, three hundred thousand dollars.

33 Sec. 7. Section 35A.16, Code 2026, is amended to read as
34 follows:

35 **35A.16 County ~~commissions of veteran affairs~~ veterans**

1 services excellence fund — appropriation.

2 1. *a.* A county ~~commissions of veteran affairs~~ veterans
3 services excellence fund is created within the state treasury
4 under the control of the department. The fund shall consist of
5 appropriations made to the fund and any other moneys available
6 to and obtained or accepted by the department from the federal
7 government or private sources for deposit in the fund. Moneys
8 in the fund are appropriated to the department to be used to
9 incentivize counties to effectively increase veteran outreach
10 and efficiency in the application for individual federal
11 veteran compensation.

12 *b.* There is appropriated from the general fund of the state
13 to the department, for the fiscal year beginning July 1, ~~2009~~
14 2026, and for each subsequent fiscal year, the sum of nine
15 hundred ninety thousand dollars to be credited to the county
16 ~~commissions of veteran affairs~~ veterans services excellence
17 fund.

18 2. Notwithstanding [section 12C.7](#), interest or earnings on
19 moneys in the ~~county commissions of veteran affairs~~ fund shall
20 be credited to the ~~county commissions of veteran affairs~~ fund.
21 Notwithstanding [section 8.33](#), moneys remaining in the ~~county~~
22 ~~commissions of veteran affairs~~ fund at the end of a fiscal year
23 shall not revert to the general fund of the state.

24 3. *a.* If sufficient moneys are available, the department
25 shall annually ~~allocate ten thousand dollars~~ make allocations
26 from the fund to each county commission of veteran affairs, or
27 to each county sharing the services of an executive director
28 or administrator pursuant to [chapter 28E](#), ~~to~~. For the fiscal
29 year beginning July 1, 2026, the department shall allocate
30 moneys equally to each qualifying county. For the fiscal year
31 beginning July 1, 2027, and each subsequent fiscal year, the
32 department shall allocate moneys based on performance criteria
33 determined by the department. The moneys shall be used to
34 provide services to veterans pursuant to [section 35B.6](#) and
35 provide for and maintain accreditation in accordance with

1 the policies and procedures of the department and the United
2 States department of veterans affairs. Each county receiving
3 an allocation shall annually report on expenditure of the
4 allocation ~~in~~ on a form ~~agreed to~~ provided by the department
5 ~~and county representatives.~~

6 *b.* If a county fails to be in compliance with the
7 requirements of [section 35B.6](#) on June 30 of each fiscal year,
8 all moneys received by the county pursuant to [this subsection](#)
9 during that fiscal year shall be reimbursed to the county
10 ~~commissions of veteran affairs fund.~~

11 *c.* Moneys distributed to a county under [this subsection](#)
12 shall be used to supplement and not supplant any existing
13 funding provided by the county or received by the county from
14 any other source. The department shall adopt a maintenance
15 of effort requirement for moneys distributed under this
16 subsection.

17 4. A county ~~commission of veteran affairs~~ veterans services
18 excellence training program and administration account shall
19 be is established within the ~~county commissions of veteran~~
20 ~~affairs fund.~~ Any moneys remaining in the fund after the
21 ~~allocations under~~ [subsection 3](#) shall be credited to the account
22 ~~and are appropriated to the department to fund the county~~
23 ~~commission of veteran affairs training program under section~~
24 ~~35A.5, subsection 6, and training for department personnel.~~
25 ~~In addition, from the moneys transferred to the account~~
26 ~~from the veterans trust fund created in~~ [section 35A.13](#), the
27 department shall annually allocate three thousand dollars to
28 each county ~~commission of veteran affairs, or to each county~~
29 ~~sharing the services of an executive director or administrator~~
30 ~~pursuant to~~ [chapter 28E](#), to be used for national training
31 ~~and related expenses of county veteran service officers and~~
32 ~~appropriate staff.~~ Moneys in the account are appropriated
33 to the department to provide training and support for county
34 commissions of veteran affairs, including but not limited to
35 a statewide standardized electronic claim system for county

1 submissions of claims to the United States department of
2 veterans affairs and education and training for county veterans
3 service officers.

4 Sec. 8. Section 35B.6, subsection 1, paragraph d, Code 2026,
5 is amended by adding the following new subparagraph:

6 NEW SUBPARAGRAPH. (4) Utilize the statewide standardized
7 electronic claim system authorized and provided by the
8 department of veterans affairs to file all claims for United
9 States department of veterans affairs benefits.

10 Sec. 9. Section 35B.7, Code 2026, is amended to read as
11 follows:

12 **35B.7 Meetings — report — budget.**

13 The commission shall meet monthly and at other times as
14 necessary. At the monthly meeting, the commission shall
15 determine who ~~are~~ is entitled to county benefits and the
16 probable amount required to be expended. The commission shall
17 also review quarterly performance reports generated by the
18 department of veterans affairs to assess the effectiveness
19 of delivery of federal benefits. The commission shall meet
20 annually to prepare an estimated budget for all expenditures
21 to be made in the next fiscal year and certify the budget to
22 the board of supervisors. The board may approve or reduce the
23 budget for valid reasons shown and entered of record and the
24 board's decision is final.

25 Sec. 10. Section 99G.39, subsection 3, Code 2026, is amended
26 to read as follows:

27 3. Two million five hundred thousand dollars in lottery
28 revenues shall be transferred each fiscal year to the veterans
29 trust fund established pursuant to [section 35A.13](#) prior to
30 deposit of the lottery revenues in the general fund of the
31 state pursuant to section 99G.40, unless the balance of the
32 veterans trust fund is equal to or greater than seventy-five
33 million dollars at the beginning of the fiscal year. However,
34 if the balance of the veterans trust fund is ~~fifty~~ seventy-five
35 million dollars or more, the moneys ~~shall be~~ are appropriated

1 to the department of veterans affairs for distribution, with
2 the first three hundred thousand dollars transferred to the
3 county veterans services excellence training program and
4 administration account created in section 35A.16, and the
5 remainder allocated to county directors of veteran affairs,
6 with fifty percent of the moneys to be distributed equally to
7 each county and fifty percent of the moneys to be distributed
8 to each county based upon the population of veterans in the
9 county, so long as the moneys distributed to a county do not
10 supplant moneys appropriated by that county for the county
11 director of veteran affairs.

12

EXPLANATION

13

The inclusion of this explanation does not constitute agreement with
14 the explanation's substance by the members of the general assembly.

15 This bill provides that Code chapters 35, 35A, 35B, 35C,
16 and 35D do not limit the ability of a veterans' service
17 organization to represent a veteran in the United States
18 department of veterans affairs benefit claims process or to be
19 granted power of attorney by a veteran for those purposes.

20 The bill replaces the county commissions of veteran
21 affairs fund and training program account with the county
22 veterans services excellence fund and training program and
23 administration account. Moneys in the fund are appropriated
24 to the department of veterans affairs (IDVA) to be used to
25 incentivize counties to effectively increase veteran outreach
26 and efficiency in the application for individual federal
27 veteran compensation.

28 Under current law, IDVA annually allocates \$10,000 from the
29 fund to each county commission of veteran affairs (CCVA) or to
30 each county sharing the services of an executive director or
31 administrator, and each county must report on the expenditure
32 of its allocation in a form agreed to by IDVA and the county
33 representatives. The bill strikes the specified allocation
34 amount. The bill provides that for FY 2026-2027, each county
35 shall receive an equal amount of moneys from the fund. For

1 subsequent fiscal years, allocations shall be based on
2 performance criteria established by IDVA.

3 The bill requires the veterans services excellence training
4 program and administration account to fund training and support
5 for CCVAs and strikes provisions that credit remaining moneys
6 in the fund to the account and that allocate \$3,000 to each
7 CCVA or each county sharing the services of an executive
8 director or administrator for training expenses.

9 The bill requires IDVA to verify that each executive
10 director and administrator of a CCVA be in compliance with
11 education and training standards established by the commandant
12 and removes the requirement to verify they are proficient in
13 general computer use.

14 The bill requires IDVA to create a statewide standardized
15 electronic claim system through which county veterans service
16 offices must submit all United States department of veterans
17 affairs claims and requires IDVA to communicate county veterans
18 service office performance metrics to CCVAs and boards of
19 supervisors. A CCVA must review the quarterly performance
20 report generated by IDVA.

21 The bill requires that for each fiscal year in which the
22 balance of the veterans trust fund is below \$75 million,
23 rather than \$50 million, the interest on the veterans trust
24 fund and the first \$500,000 received from the lottery fund is
25 appropriated to the commission of veterans affairs to provide
26 various benefits to veterans and veterans' families according
27 to Code section 35A.13(8). The bill removes requirements for
28 moneys in the veterans trust fund when the balance is above \$50
29 million.

30 Under current law, when the balance of the veterans
31 trust fund is \$50 million or more, lottery revenues that
32 would otherwise be deposited in the veterans trust fund are
33 distributed to county directors of veteran affairs. The bill
34 provides that this distribution shall not occur unless the
35 balance of the veterans trust fund is \$75 million or more and

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1 requires the first \$300,000 of these moneys to be transferred
2 to the county veterans services excellence training program and
3 administration account.