



Senate

General Assembly

File No. 100

January Session, 2015

Substitute Senate Bill No. 904

Senate, March 17, 2015

The Committee on Veterans' Affairs reported through SEN. FLEXER of the 29th Dist., Chairperson of the Committee on the part of the Senate, that the substitute bill ought to pass.

AN ACT ESTABLISHING THE CONNECTICUT WOMEN VETERANS' PROGRAM.

Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives in General Assembly convened:

1 Section 1. (NEW) (*Effective October 1, 2015*) The Department of
2 Veterans' Affairs shall establish, within available resources, a
3 Connecticut women veterans' program to (1) conduct outreach to
4 women veterans for the purpose of improving awareness of eligibility
5 for federal and state veterans' benefits and services; (2) conduct
6 assessments of the needs of women veterans with respect to benefits
7 and services; (3) review programs, research projects and other
8 initiatives designed to address or meet the needs of Connecticut's
9 women veterans; (4) submit recommendations for improving benefits
10 and services available to women veterans to the Commissioner of
11 Veterans' Affairs and, in accordance with the provisions of section 11-
12 4a of the general statutes, to the joint standing committee of the
13 General Assembly having cognizance of matters relating to military
14 and veterans' affairs on January 15, 2016, and annually thereafter; and

15 (5) incorporate women veterans' issues in strategic planning
 16 concerning benefits and services. The commissioner may adopt
 17 regulations in accordance with chapter 54 of the general statutes to
 18 supplement and implement the provisions of this section. For the
 19 purposes of this section, "veteran" means any person who was
 20 discharged or released under conditions other than dishonorable from
 21 active service in the armed forces and "armed forces" has the same
 22 meaning as provided in section 27-103 of the general statutes.

This act shall take effect as follows and shall amend the following sections:		
Section 1	October 1, 2015	New section

VA *Joint Favorable Subst.*

The following Fiscal Impact Statement and Bill Analysis are prepared for the benefit of the members of the General Assembly, solely for purposes of information, summarization and explanation and do not represent the intent of the General Assembly or either chamber thereof for any purpose. In general, fiscal impacts are based upon a variety of informational sources, including the analyst's professional knowledge. Whenever applicable, agency data is consulted as part of the analysis, however final products do not necessarily reflect an assessment from any specific department.

OFA Fiscal Note**State Impact:** None**Municipal Impact:** None**Explanation**

The bill requires the Department of Veterans Affairs (DVA) to establish a Connecticut Women Veterans' Program within available appropriations. The bill is not anticipated to result in a fiscal impact as DVA currently has a program for all veterans including women.

The Out Years**State Impact:** None**Municipal Impact:** None

OLR Bill Analysis**sSB 904*****AN ACT ESTABLISHING THE CONNECTICUT WOMEN VETERANS' PROGRAM.*****SUMMARY:**

This bill requires the Department of Veterans' Affairs to establish, within available resources, a Connecticut women veterans' program.

The program must:

1. reach out to women veterans to improve awareness of federal and state veterans' benefits and services eligibility;
2. assess women veterans' needs for benefits and services;
3. review programs, research projects, and other initiatives designed to address or meet Connecticut women veterans' needs; and
4. incorporate women veterans' issues in strategic planning on benefits and services.

The program must also annually submit recommendations for improving benefits and services for women veterans to the veterans' affairs commissioner and the Veterans' Affairs Committee beginning January 15, 2016. The veterans' affairs commissioner may adopt regulations to supplement and implement the program.

Under the bill, a veteran is anyone discharged or released under conditions other than dishonorable from active service in the armed forces (U. S. Army, Navy, Marine Corps, Coast Guard, and Air Force and any reserve component of these branches, including the Connecticut National Guard performing duty under Title 32 of federal

law).

EFFECTIVE DATE: October 1, 2015

COMMITTEE ACTION

Veterans' Affairs Committee

Joint Favorable Substitute

Yea 14 Nay 0 (03/03/2015)