

Military Honors Fund, Death Benefits, Disabled Veterans Preference, and Other Technical Adjustments to Legislation; SB 263

SB 263 establishes

- The Military Honors Funeral Fund in the State Treasury;
- An alternative death gratuity payment arrangement with the Kansas Adjutant General; and
- Preference in the State Use Law for disabled veterans.

The bill also makes technical adjustments to 2014 Sub. for HB 2681, which abolished the Kansas Commission on Veterans Affairs, replacing it with the Kansas Commission on Veterans Affairs Office, and to 2014 Senate Sub. for HB 2506 regarding school districts on military bases.

Military Honors Fund

The Military Honors Funeral Fund is established, to be administered by the Adjutant General. Any gifts, grants, donations, and bequests for the purpose of providing military honors at funerals will be deposited in the new fund. Expenditures are subject to appropriations by the Legislature. Interest is credited to this fund.

Death Gratuity Payment

The bill requires the Adjutant General to pay a death gratuity of \$100,000 for any eligible Kansas military service member during a federal government shutdown, beginning on or after January 1, 2015, if federal funds are not available. Funding for the alternative death gratuity payment will be loaned by the Pooled Money Investment Board to the Adjutant General. The Adjutant General is required to develop and implement procedures on or before January 1, 2015, to secure such federal reimbursements after the government reopens. The bill creates the Adjutant General Death Gratuity Payment Facilitation Fund in the State Treasury for these transactions.

State Use Law and Preference to Disabled Veterans

The bill revises provisions of the State Use Law as it pertains to bidding preferences for state contracts, certified businesses, and procurement negotiating committees by adding definitions for “disabled veteran” and “disabled veteran business.”

The bill establishes a new preference for awarding state job or service contracts to disabled veteran businesses in Kansas. The Secretary of Administration will have the goal to award at least 3.0 percent of all state contracts to disabled veteran businesses. By October 1, 2015, the Secretary of Administration must file with the Kansas Commission on Veterans Affairs Office a report of the number of contracts awarded to disabled veteran businesses during FY

2015 and the number of such businesses that responded to state bids. "Disabled veteran" is defined as a person verified by the Kansas Commission on Veterans Affairs Office to have served in the armed forces of the United States and who is entitled to compensation for a service-connected disability or loss, or permanent loss of use of one or both feet or one or both hands, or for permanent visual impairment. "Disabled veteran business" means a business certified annually by the Department of Administration that is a sole proprietorship, partnership, association or corporation domiciled in Kansas, or any corporation, even if a wholly owned subsidiary of a foreign corporation, and is verified by the Kansas Commission on Veterans Affairs Office.

Kansas Commission on Veterans Affairs Office

Technical changes to 2014 Sub. for HB 2681 are included to correct the language which abolished the Kansas Commission on Veterans Affairs and created the Kansas Commission on Veterans Affairs Office.

Education Funding

Also included are changes that will allow school districts on military reservations in Kansas to receive school facilities weighting if the district commences operation of a new school facility in school year 2013-2014 or 2014-2015, the construction of such facility was financed primarily with federal funds, and the school is located on a military reservation. School facilities weighting may be assigned to enrollment of the district only in the school year in which operation of a new school facility is commenced and in the next succeeding year.