

2019 Regular Session

HOUSE BILL NO. 137

BY REPRESENTATIVES ARMES AND PUGH

1 AN ACT

2 To amend and reenact R.S. 29:252(A), 253(C), 254, 255, 256, 257, 259, 261(A), and 385(C),
3 and to repeal R.S. 29:258 and R.S. 36:781(C)(2) and (3), relative to veterans' affairs;
4 to provide relative to the Louisiana Department of Veterans Affairs; to provide
5 relative to the organization of the department; to provide relative to the secretary of
6 the department; to provide relative to the duties and authority of the Veterans' Affairs
7 Commission; and to provide for related matters.

8 Be it enacted by the Legislature of Louisiana:

9 Section 1. R.S. 29:252(A), 253(C), 254, 255, 256, 257, 259, 261(A), and 385(C) are
10 hereby amended and reenacted to read as follows:

11 §252. Department of ~~veterans affairs~~ Veterans Affairs

12 A. There is established in the state government a ~~department~~ Department of
13 ~~veterans affairs~~ Veterans Affairs, the administrative head of which is the state
14 ~~director~~ secretary of the department of ~~veterans affairs~~.

15 * * *

16 §253. Veterans' Affairs Commission

17 * * *

18 C. The commission shall elect one of its members as chairman. It shall
19 maintain its principal office in Baton Rouge in space provided by state officials or
20 in rented offices if suitable space is not available in state buildings. It shall maintain
21 its records and its principal office in such space. It shall hold its regular meetings
22 there, unless in the discretion of the chairman it is necessary or convenient in the
23 performance of its duties to meet in some other city. At least one regular meeting

1 shall be held in each quarter annual period. The commission shall not meet more
 2 than twelve days in any fiscal year, including any special meetings, which may be
 3 held at times and places specified by the call of the chairman. Written notice of the
 4 time and place of meetings shall be given by the ~~director~~ secretary, who shall call
 5 meetings whenever requested by a majority of the commission. A majority
 6 constitutes a quorum for the transaction of business. No action will be taken by the
 7 commission without the concurrence of at least five members personally present and
 8 voting. Voting by proxy, by representation, or by mail is prohibited. The secretary
 9 ~~of the department~~ ~~director shall act as secretary of the commission and~~ shall keep
 10 adequate records and minutes of its business and official actions.

11 §254. Duties of the commission

12 In addition to its other duties, the commission shall:

13 ~~(1) Adopt, amend, and promulgate rules and regulations.~~

14 ~~(2) Make and publish annual reports and whatever special reports it thinks~~
 15 ~~desirable to the governor concerning the administration and general operation of the~~
 16 ~~department.~~

17 ~~(3) Establish departmental divisions, when and if necessary, and adopt rules~~
 18 ~~and regulations governing their operation.~~

19 ~~(4) Advise~~ advise the ~~director~~ secretary in problems concerning the welfare
 20 of veterans, ~~fix the duties of the director, and determine~~ and advise regarding the
 21 ~~what functions are necessary or desirable for him to perform in carrying out the~~
 22 ~~purposes of this Part.~~

23 ~~(5) Determine the general and administrative policies of the department.~~

24 ~~(6) Establish, discontinue, or consolidate service offices throughout the state,~~
 25 ~~and in connection therewith, adopt and amend rules and regulations governing the~~
 26 ~~qualifications and appointment of service officers and the conduct and operation of~~
 27 ~~the service offices.~~

28 §255. ~~Appointment~~ Position of the ~~director~~ secretary

29 The position of the ~~director~~ secretary of ~~veterans'~~ veterans affairs as an
 30 officer of the state is established, as provided in R.S. 36:783 et seq.

1 United States of America for the purpose of receiving the benefits of the federal laws
2 pertaining to aid and benefits for veterans.

3 * * *

4 §261. Establishment of service offices; rules; contributions by department

5 A. ~~With the approval of the commission, the director~~ The secretary shall
6 establish service offices in the several parishes or consolidate service offices to serve
7 more than one parish and municipality when the parishes and municipalities affected
8 contribute to the maintenance of these offices in accordance with the authority
9 contained in R.S. 29:260.

10 * * *

11 §385. Deposit of residents' funds; disbursements; interest

12 * * *

13 C. Interest earned on funds deposited with the Department of Veterans
14 Affairs as provided in ~~R.S. 29:385(A)~~ Subsection A of this Section and any private
15 donations so designated shall be deposited in a resident's recreation and welfare fund
16 and shall be expended by the department for the recreation and general welfare of all
17 residents of its healthcare facilities. ~~The Veterans' Affairs Commission shall~~
18 ~~establish by rule appropriate guidelines and policies with respect to the expenditure~~
19 ~~of such funds.~~

20 Section 2. R.S. 29:258 and R.S. 36:781(C)(2) and (3) are hereby repealed in their
21 entirety.

SPEAKER OF THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

PRESIDENT OF THE SENATE

GOVERNOR OF THE STATE OF LOUISIANA

APPROVED: _____