

**The following Veteran related legislation was enacted into law during the 2013 Indiana Congressional session: Members of the Coalition testified before the Committees on each of the following Bills.**

See <http://www.in.gov/legislative> for complete versions of each action.

**Senate Bill 0115 - Combat to college program (Coalition Goal #13)**

Requires state educational institutions that have at least 200 veteran students enrolled to establish a combat to college program (program). Requires a state educational institution to: (1) provide a centralized location for admissions, registration, and financial administration services for veteran students; (2) provide reasonable accommodations for disabled veteran students at a state educational institution's fitness facility; (3) develop programs to provide academic guidance specifically to veteran students; (4) develop programs to provide access to counseling services or resources to veteran students who are disabled or suffering from posttraumatic stress disorder; and (5) develop job search programs designed for veteran students. Requires each state educational institution to designate a program coordinator.

**Senate Bill 0177 - Tuition rates for veterans**

Provides that qualified veterans are eligible for the resident tuition rate for undergraduate courses upon enrolling in a state educational institution not later than 12 months after discharge or separation from the United States armed forces or Indiana National Guard. Requires a qualified veteran to provide to the state educational institution, not later than 12 months after enrolling in the state educational institution, to provide certain information to show that the veteran resides in Indiana. Provides that if the qualified veteran does not provide the required proof of residency: (1) the qualified veteran is subject to the tuition policies established by the state educational institution; and (2) the qualified veteran must repay the state educational institution an amount that equals the difference between the nonresident tuition rate and the tuition rate charged to the qualified veteran during the first 12 months of the qualified veteran's enrollment at the state educational institution. Provides that a qualified veteran who enrolls later than 12 months after the qualified veteran's discharge or separation date is subject to the tuition policies determined by the state educational institution. Provides that qualified veterans who enroll in graduate degree programs are subject to the tuition policies determined by the state educational institution.

**Senate Bill 0290 and House Bill 1486 - Military trained emergency medical providers**

Provides that the emergency medical services commission (commission) shall issue a license or certificate to a military service applicant who meets certain requirements. Allows the commission to issue a temporary practice certificate or provisional license while the military service applicant is satisfying certain requirements as determined by the commission.

## **Senate Bill 0403 - Disabled Hoosier veteran license plate**

(Coalition Goal #16)

Provides for the issuance of a disabled Hoosier veteran license plate to a person who: (1) has been rated by the United States Department of Veterans Affairs (department) as being at least 50% disabled with at least a 30% mobility disability rating; and (2) receives service connected compensation from the department.

## **Senate Bill 0563 - Various motor vehicle issues**

Amends various provisions concerning certificates of title and registrations for motor vehicles and watercraft. Relocates chapter concerning special identification numbers. Amends various provisions concerning license plates. **Exempts recipients of Purple Heart license plates from parking fees and fines.** Amends various provisions relating to abandoned vehicles and mobile homes. Provides that a motor vehicle that is at least 25 years old is not required to have a catalytic converter installed as equipment on the motor vehicle unless a catalytic converter on the motor vehicle is required by certain rules relating to air quality. Makes conforming amendments and technical corrections.

## **Senate Bill 0564 - Veterans preference on state contracts**

(Coalition Goal #12)

Provides that an Indiana veteran owned small business (VOSB) is eligible for the small business set aside procurement policy for state procurements and for procurements by political subdivisions that have adopted the set aside policy. Provides that the 15% price preference for small businesses applies to Indiana VOSBs. Requires the department of administration to adopt rules to increase contracting opportunities for Indiana VOSBs with a goal to procure in each state fiscal year at least 3% of state contracts with Indiana VOSBs. Provides that the Indiana economic development corporation may assist the department of administration: (1) compiling and maintaining a list of Indiana VOSBs; (2) assisting Indiana VOSBs to comply with procedures for bidding on state contracts; (3) helping determine which purchases of supplies or services are consistent with the state's VOSB procurement goal; and (4) simplifying specifications and contract terms to increase opportunities for Indiana VOSB participation in state contracts. Provides for the development of programs to encourage cities, counties, towns, townships, and private businesses to adopt the state's VOSB procurement goal. Requires the department of administration to report on the percentage of state contracts with Indiana VOSBs.

## **House Bill 1387 - Veterans' affairs (Coalition Goal #11)**

Creates the Indiana Funeral Honors Ribbon to be awarded to members and retired members of the Indiana Air National Guard and the Indiana Army National Guard and members of veterans' organizations who: (1) are trained and certified for; and (2) provide honorable and distinguished service in; the performance of military funerals and similar activities within Indiana. Provides that county and city service officers must be certified by the Indiana department of veterans' affairs (department). Requires the veterans' affairs commission to: (1) establish standards for certification of county and city service officers; and (2) establish and administer a

written examination for renewal of the certification of county and city service officers. Requires a county or city service officer to obtain certification from the department within 30 days after becoming employed as a service officer. Requires a new county or city service officer, within one year after becoming employed as a service officer, to attend a course and become accredited to represent veterans. Requires a county or city service officer employed prior to July 1, 2013, to attend a course and become accredited to represent veterans by July 1, 2015. Requires the veterans' affairs commission to administer a grant program to reimburse service officers for training expenses and to reimburse counties and cities employing service officers for computer equipment and software. Transfers \$180,000 from the veterans' affairs trust fund to the military family relief fund. Appropriates the \$180,000 for the grant program. Provides that funding the grants is a purpose of the military family relief fund.

## **Following are other Bills passed into Law that will affect Veterans in Indiana.**

### **House Bill 1016 - Problem solving courts.**

Provides additional circumstances under which a person can participate in a problem solving court program. Provides that a problem solving court may provide rehabilitative services. Simplifies the problem solving court fee transfer process. **Urges the legislative council to require the Commission on Courts to evaluate the funding of veteran's courts during the 2013 interim.**

### **House Bill 1157 - Various election law matters**

*Along with many other changes;* Makes changes concerning the procedure for processing military and overseas voter absentee ballot applications. Permits a military or overseas voter to transmit an absentee ballot application or a secrecy waiver for an absentee ballot by sending electronic mail with a digital image (rather than an optically scanned image under current law) as an attachment.

### **House Bill 1279 - Special group, disabled Hoosier veteran, and National Guard license plates.**

Creates the special group recognition license plate committee consisting of eight members of the general assembly, and specifies that the primary purpose of the committee is to make recommendations to the bureau of motor vehicles (bureau) regarding special group recognition license plates (plate). Specifies the criteria to be met by a special group for the issuance of a plate. Specifies procedures for continued participation in the special group recognition license plate program by a special group, including sales and renewal requirements. **Provides that a person who is an active member of the Army or Air National Guard may apply for and receive one or more National Guard license plates. (Current law requires that the person must be an active member of the Indiana Army or Air National Guard.) Requires the bureau to design a National Guard license plate. Removes the restriction that not more than two disabled Hoosier veteran license plates may be issued to one person.** Makes conforming amendments.

## House Bill 1544 - Motorsports

*Along with many other changes;* Provides that the goals for participation for the improvements financed under these provisions are 15% for minority business enterprises, 8% for women's business enterprises, **and 3% for veteran or disabled business enterprises**, consistent with the goals of delivering projects on time and within budget.

## HB 1546 - Tax administration (Coalition Goal #6)

*Along with many other changes;* Specifies that a deceased veteran's surviving spouse is eligible for a veteran's property tax deduction if the deceased veteran satisfied the requirements for the deduction at the time of death and the surviving spouse owns the property at the time the deduction statement is filed. Specifies that the surviving spouse may provide the documentation necessary to establish that the deceased veteran qualified for the deduction at the time of death. Provides that the surviving spouse is entitled to the deduction regardless of whether the property for which the deduction is claimed was owned by the deceased veteran or the surviving spouse before the deceased veteran's death. Provides that a surviving spouse who was denied the deduction for the March 1, 2012, or March 1, 2013, assessment date is entitled to a refund of the property taxes paid with respect to the denied amount if the qualifying surviving spouse files a statement for the deduction before September 1, 2013. Allows veterans with qualifying disabilities who do not own certain types of taxable property to claim credits against the motor vehicle excise tax. Allows the surviving spouses of qualified veterans and World War I veterans who do not own those types of taxable property to claim the credits. Specifies that the amount of the credit is the lesser of the claimant's excise tax liability or \$70. Provides that the maximum number of vehicles for which credits may be claimed is two. (Current law allows such veterans to apply any excess property tax deduction amount to the motor vehicle excise tax as a credit, but owning property is a requirement for claiming the property tax deduction and applying its excess to the excise tax.)

## Senate Bill 0207 - Resident tuition rate

*Along with many other changes;* **Provides that qualified veterans are eligible for the resident tuition rate for undergraduate courses upon enrolling in a state educational institution not later than 12 months after discharge or separation from the United States armed forces. Requires a qualified veteran to provide to the state educational institution, not later than 12 months after enrolling in the state educational institution to provide certain information to show that the veteran resides in Indiana. Provides that if the qualified veteran does not provide the required proof of residency the qualified veteran is subject to the tuition policies established by the state educational institution.**

## Senate Bill 0387 - Parking for persons with disabilities

Increases from \$50 to \$100 the minimum civil judgment imposed for certain infractions involving parking a motor vehicle in a space reserved for a person with a physical disability or **a disabled veteran**.

## **Senate Bill 0323 - Battle flag preservation**

Renames the Civil War flags fund as the Indiana battle flags fund. Specifies that the fund may be used to restore and preserve all Indiana battle flags (rather than only Civil War flags).

## **The following Resolutions of interest to Veterans were adopted:**

### **SENATE CONCURRENT RESOLUTION No. 15**

Urging the Indiana Department of Transportation to rename one mile sections of the Hoosier Heartland Highway running through Tippecanoe County in honor of Medal of Honor recipients Lieutenant William P. Thompson, General David M. Shoup, and Master Sergeant Thomas E. McCall.

### **SENATE CONCURRENT RESOLUTION No. 17**

Urging the Indiana Department of Transportation to name any part of Interstate 69 south of Interstate 465 the Iraq Afghanistan Veterans Memorial Highway.

### **HOUSE CONCURRENT RESOLUTION No. 6**

Designating the Honor and Remember Flag as the state symbol of the sacrifice made by members of the United States Armed Forces who have given their lives in the line of duty.

### **HOUSE CONCURRENT RESOLUTION No. 15**

Urging the Indiana Department of Transportation to designate the entire length of U.S. 41 as a Purple Heart Trail.

### **HOUSE CONCURRENT RESOLUTION No. 29**

Urging the Indiana Department of Transportation to rename that part of Indiana State Road 56 and U.S. Highway 150 that converge as a single roadway between Paoli and French Lick as the Vietnam Veterans Memorial Highway.

### **HOUSE CONCURRENT RESOLUTION No. 59**

Recognizing the Indiana Military Veterans' Hall of Fame.