

**As Reported by the House Armed Services and Veterans Affairs
Committee**

134th General Assembly

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2021-2022**

S. B. No. 259

Senator Hoagland

**Cosponsors: Senators Hackett, Johnson, Antonio, Blessing, Brenner, Cirino,
Craig, Dolan, Gavarone, Hottinger, Kunze, Lang, Maharath, McColley, O'Brien,
Peterson, Reineke, Romanchuk, Rulli, Schaffer, Sykes, Thomas, Yuko
Representatives Miller, A., Gross**

A BILL

To amend section 5902.02 of the Revised Code to add 1
a member of the Paralyzed Veterans of America 2
organization to the Veterans Advisory Committee. 3

BE IT ENACTED BY THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF THE STATE OF OHIO:

Section 1. That section 5902.02 of the Revised Code be 4
amended to read as follows: 5

Sec. 5902.02. The duties of the director of veterans 6
services shall include the following: 7

(A) Furnishing the veterans service commissions of all 8
counties of the state copies of the state laws, rules, and 9
legislation relating to the operation of the commissions and 10
their offices; 11

(B) Upon application, assisting the general public in 12
obtaining records of vital statistics pertaining to veterans or 13
their dependents; 14

(C) Adopting rules pursuant to Chapter 119. of the Revised Code pertaining to minimum qualifications for hiring, certifying, and accrediting county veterans service officers, pertaining to their required duties, and pertaining to revocation of the certification of county veterans service officers;

(D) Adopting rules pursuant to Chapter 119. of the Revised Code for the education, training, certification, and duties of veterans service commissioners and for the revocation of the certification of a veterans service commissioner;

(E) Developing and monitoring programs and agreements enhancing employment and training for veterans in single or multiple county areas;

(F) Developing and monitoring programs and agreements to enable county veterans service commissions to address homelessness, indigency, and other veteran-related issues individually or jointly;

(G) Developing and monitoring programs and agreements to enable state agencies, individually or jointly, that provide services to veterans, including the veterans' homes operated under Chapter 5907. of the Revised Code and the director of job and family services, to address homelessness, indigency, employment, and other veteran-related issues;

(H) Establishing and providing statistical reporting formats and procedures for county veterans service commissions;

(I) Publishing electronically a listing of county veterans service offices and county veterans service commissioners. The listing shall include the expiration dates of commission members' terms of office and the organizations they represent;

the names, addresses, and telephone numbers of county veterans 44
service offices; and the addresses and telephone numbers of the 45
Ohio offices and headquarters of state and national veterans 46
service organizations. 47

(J) Establishing a veterans advisory committee to advise 48
and assist the department of veterans services in its duties. 49
Members shall include a member of the national guard association 50
of the United States who is a resident of this state, a member 51
of the paralyzed veterans of America who is a resident of this 52
state, a member of the military officers association of America 53
who is a resident of this state, a state representative of 54
congressionally chartered veterans organizations referred to in 55
section 5901.02 of the Revised Code, a representative of any 56
other congressionally chartered state veterans organization that 57
has at least one veterans service commissioner in the state, 58
three representatives of the Ohio state association of county 59
veterans service commissioners, who shall have a combined vote 60
of one, three representatives of the state association of county 61
veterans service officers, who shall have a combined vote of 62
one, one representative of the county commissioners association 63
of Ohio, who shall be a county commissioner not from the same 64
county as any of the other county representatives, a 65
representative of the advisory committee on women veterans, a 66
representative of a labor organization, and a representative of 67
the office of the attorney general. The department of veterans 68
services shall submit to the advisory committee proposed rules 69
for the committee's operation. The committee may review and 70
revise these proposed rules prior to submitting them to the 71
joint committee on agency rule review. 72

(K) Adopting, with the advice and assistance of the 73
veterans advisory committee, policy and procedural guidelines 74

that the veterans service commissions shall adhere to in the 75
development and implementation of rules, policies, procedures, 76
and guidelines for the administration of Chapter 5901. of the 77
Revised Code. The department of veterans services shall adopt no 78
guidelines or rules regulating the purposes, scope, duration, or 79
amounts of financial assistance provided to applicants pursuant 80
to sections 5901.01 to 5901.15 of the Revised Code. The director 81
of veterans services may obtain opinions from the office of the 82
attorney general regarding rules, policies, procedures, and 83
guidelines of the veterans service commissions and may enforce 84
compliance with Chapter 5901. of the Revised Code. 85

(L) Receiving copies of form DD214 filed in accordance 86
with the director's guidelines adopted under division (L) of 87
this section from members of veterans service commissions 88
appointed under section 5901.02 and from county veterans service 89
officers employed under section 5901.07 of the Revised Code; 90

(M) Developing and maintaining and improving a resource, 91
such as a telephone answering point or a web site, by means of 92
which veterans and their dependents, through a single portal, 93
can access multiple sources of information and interaction with 94
regard to the rights of, and the benefits available to, veterans 95
and their dependents. The director of veterans services may 96
enter into agreements with state and federal agencies, with 97
agencies of political subdivisions, with state and local 98
instrumentalities, and with private entities as necessary to 99
make the resource as complete as is possible. 100

(N) Planning, organizing, advertising, and conducting 101
outreach efforts, such as conferences and fairs, at which 102
veterans and their dependents may meet, learn about the 103
organization and operation of the department of veterans 104

services and of veterans service commissions, and obtain 105
information about the rights of, and the benefits and services 106
available to, veterans and their dependents; 107

(O) Advertising, in print, on radio and television, and 108
otherwise, the rights of, and the benefits and services 109
available to, veterans and their dependents; 110

(P) Developing and advocating improved benefits and 111
services for, and improved delivery of benefits and services to, 112
veterans and their dependents; 113

(Q) Searching for, identifying, and reviewing statutory 114
and administrative policies that relate to veterans and their 115
dependents and reporting to the general assembly statutory and 116
administrative policies that should be consolidated in whole or 117
in part within the organization of the department of veterans 118
services to unify funding, delivery, and accounting of statutory 119
and administrative policy expressions that relate particularly 120
to veterans and their dependents; 121

(R) Encouraging veterans service commissions to innovate 122
and otherwise to improve efficiency in delivering benefits and 123
services to veterans and their dependents and to report 124
successful innovations and efficiencies to the director of 125
veterans services; 126

(S) Publishing and encouraging adoption of successful 127
innovations and efficiencies veterans service commissions have 128
achieved in delivering benefits and services to veterans and 129
their dependents; 130

(T) Establishing advisory committees, in addition to the 131
veterans advisory committee established under division ~~(K)~~ (J) 132
of this section, on veterans issues; 133

(U) Developing and maintaining a relationship with the 134
United States department of veterans affairs, seeking optimal 135
federal benefits and services for Ohio veterans and their 136
dependents, and encouraging veterans service commissions to 137
maximize the federal benefits and services to which veterans and 138
their dependents are entitled; 139

(V) Developing and maintaining relationships with the 140
several veterans organizations, encouraging the organizations in 141
their efforts at assisting veterans and their dependents, and 142
advocating for adequate state subsidization of the 143
organizations; 144

(W) Requiring the several veterans organizations that 145
receive funding from the state annually, not later than the 146
thirtieth day of July, to report to the director of veterans 147
services and prescribing the form and content of the report; 148

(X) Reviewing the reports submitted to the director under 149
division (W) of this section within thirty days of receipt and 150
informing the veterans organization of any deficiencies that 151
exist in the organization's report and that funding will not be 152
released until the deficiencies have been corrected and a 153
satisfactory report submitted; 154

(Y) Releasing funds and processing payments to veterans 155
organizations when a report submitted to the director under 156
division (W) of this section has been reviewed and determined to 157
be satisfactory; 158

(Z) Furnishing copies of all reports that the director of 159
veterans services has determined have been submitted 160
satisfactorily under division (W) of this section to the 161
chairperson of the finance committees of the general assembly; 162

(AA) Investigating complaints against county veterans services commissioners and county veterans service officers if the director reasonably believes the investigation to be appropriate and necessary;	163 164 165 166
(BB) Developing and maintaining a web site that is accessible by veterans and their dependents and provides a link to the web site of each state agency that issues a license, certificate, or other authorization permitting an individual to engage in an occupation or occupational activity;	167 168 169 170 171
(CC) Encouraging state agencies to conduct outreach efforts through which veterans and their dependents can learn about available job and education benefits;	172 173 174
(DD) Informing state agencies about changes in statutes and rules that affect veterans and their dependents;	175 176
(EE) Assisting licensing agencies in adopting rules under section 5903.03 of the Revised Code;	177 178
(FF) Administering the provision of grants from the military injury relief fund under section 5902.05 of the Revised Code;	179 180 181
(GG) Taking any other actions required by this chapter.	182
Section 2. That existing section 5902.02 of the Revised Code is hereby repealed.	183 184