

As Introduced

135th General Assembly

Regular Session

2023-2024

H. B. No. 409

Representative Miller, J.

**Cosponsors: Representatives McNally, Brennan, Thomas, C., Forhan, Weinstein,
Russo, Grim, Miranda, Somani, Miller, A., Jarrells, Dell'Aquila, Rogers**

A BILL

To amend section 5902.02 and to enact sections 1
5902.09 and 5919.21 of the Revised Code to 2
create the Ohio Cold War Victory Medal. 3

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

Section 1. That section 5902.02 be amended and sections 4
5902.09 and 5919.21 of the Revised Code be enacted to read as 5
follows: 6

Sec. 5902.02. The duties of the director of veterans 7
services shall include the following: 8

(A) Furnishing the veterans service commissions of all 9
counties of the state copies of the state laws, rules, and 10
legislation relating to the operation of the commissions and 11
their offices; 12

(B) Upon application, assisting the general public in 13
obtaining records of vital statistics pertaining to veterans or 14
their dependents; 15

(C) Adopting rules pursuant to Chapter 119. of the Revised 16

Code pertaining to minimum qualifications for hiring, 17
certifying, and accrediting county veterans service officers, 18
pertaining to their required duties, and pertaining to 19
revocation of the certification of county veterans service 20
officers; 21

(D) Adopting rules pursuant to Chapter 119. of the Revised 22
Code for the education, training, certification, and duties of 23
veterans service commissioners and for the revocation of the 24
certification of a veterans service commissioner; 25

(E) Developing and monitoring programs and agreements 26
enhancing employment and training for veterans in single or 27
multiple county areas; 28

(F) Developing and monitoring programs and agreements to 29
enable county veterans service commissions to address 30
homelessness, indigency, and other veteran-related issues 31
individually or jointly; 32

(G) Developing and monitoring programs and agreements to 33
enable state agencies, individually or jointly, that provide 34
services to veterans, including the veterans' homes operated 35
under Chapter 5907. of the Revised Code and the director of job 36
and family services, to address homelessness, indigency, 37
employment, and other veteran-related issues; 38

(H) Establishing and providing statistical reporting 39
formats and procedures for county veterans service commissions; 40

(I) Publishing electronically a listing of county veterans 41
service offices and county veterans service commissioners. The 42
listing shall include the expiration dates of commission 43
members' terms of office and the organizations they represent; 44
the names, addresses, and telephone numbers of county veterans 45

service offices; and the addresses and telephone numbers of the 46
Ohio offices and headquarters of state and national veterans 47
service organizations. 48

(J) Establishing a veterans advisory committee to advise 49
and assist the department of veterans services in its duties. 50
Members shall include a member of the national guard association 51
of the United States who is a resident of this state, a member 52
of the paralyzed veterans of America who is a resident of this 53
state, a member of the military officers association of America 54
who is a resident of this state, a state representative of 55
congressionally chartered veterans organizations referred to in 56
section 5901.02 of the Revised Code, a representative of any 57
other congressionally chartered state veterans organization that 58
has at least one veterans service commissioner in the state, 59
three representatives of the Ohio state association of county 60
veterans service commissioners, who shall have a combined vote 61
of one, three representatives of the state association of county 62
veterans service officers, who shall have a combined vote of 63
one, one representative of the county commissioners association 64
of Ohio, who shall be a county commissioner not from the same 65
county as any of the other county representatives, a 66
representative of the advisory committee on women veterans, a 67
representative of a labor organization, and a representative of 68
the office of the attorney general. The department of veterans 69
services shall submit to the advisory committee proposed rules 70
for the committee's operation. The committee may review and 71
revise these proposed rules prior to submitting them to the 72
joint committee on agency rule review. 73

(K) Adopting, with the advice and assistance of the 74
veterans advisory committee, policy and procedural guidelines 75
that the veterans service commissions shall adhere to in the 76

development and implementation of rules, policies, procedures, 77
and guidelines for the administration of Chapter 5901. of the 78
Revised Code. The department of veterans services shall adopt no 79
guidelines or rules regulating the purposes, scope, duration, or 80
amounts of financial assistance provided to applicants pursuant 81
to sections 5901.01 to 5901.15 of the Revised Code. The director 82
of veterans services may obtain opinions from the office of the 83
attorney general regarding rules, policies, procedures, and 84
guidelines of the veterans service commissions and may enforce 85
compliance with Chapter 5901. of the Revised Code. 86

(L) Receiving copies of form DD214 filed in accordance 87
with the director's guidelines adopted under division (L) of 88
this section from members of veterans service commissions 89
appointed under section 5901.02 and from county veterans service 90
officers employed under section 5901.07 of the Revised Code; 91

(M) Developing and maintaining and improving a resource, 92
such as a telephone answering point or a web site, by means of 93
which veterans and their dependents, through a single portal, 94
can access multiple sources of information and interaction with 95
regard to the rights of, and the benefits available to, veterans 96
and their dependents. The director of veterans services may 97
enter into agreements with state and federal agencies, with 98
agencies of political subdivisions, with state and local 99
instrumentalities, and with private entities as necessary to 100
make the resource as complete as is possible. 101

(N) Planning, organizing, advertising, and conducting 102
outreach efforts, such as conferences and fairs, at which 103
veterans and their dependents may meet, learn about the 104
organization and operation of the department of veterans 105
services and of veterans service commissions, and obtain 106

information about the rights of, and the benefits and services available to, veterans and their dependents;	107 108
(O) Advertising, in print, on radio and television, and otherwise, the rights of, and the benefits and services available to, veterans and their dependents;	109 110 111
(P) Developing and advocating improved benefits and services for, and improved delivery of benefits and services to, veterans and their dependents;	112 113 114
(Q) Searching for, identifying, and reviewing statutory and administrative policies that relate to veterans and their dependents and reporting to the general assembly statutory and administrative policies that should be consolidated in whole or in part within the organization of the department of veterans services to unify funding, delivery, and accounting of statutory and administrative policy expressions that relate particularly to veterans and their dependents;	115 116 117 118 119 120 121 122
(R) Encouraging veterans service commissions to innovate and otherwise to improve efficiency in delivering benefits and services to veterans and their dependents and to report successful innovations and efficiencies to the director of veterans services;	123 124 125 126 127
(S) Publishing and encouraging adoption of successful innovations and efficiencies veterans service commissions have achieved in delivering benefits and services to veterans and their dependents;	128 129 130 131
(T) Establishing advisory committees, in addition to the veterans advisory committee established under division (J) of this section, on veterans issues;	132 133 134
(U) Developing and maintaining a relationship with the	135

United States department of veterans affairs, seeking optimal	136
federal benefits and services for Ohio veterans and their	137
dependents, and encouraging veterans service commissions to	138
maximize the federal benefits and services to which veterans and	139
their dependents are entitled;	140
(V) Developing and maintaining relationships with the	141
several veterans organizations, encouraging the organizations in	142
their efforts at assisting veterans and their dependents, and	143
advocating for adequate state subsidization of the	144
organizations;	145
(W) Requiring the several veterans organizations that	146
receive funding from the state annually, not later than the	147
thirtieth day of July, to report to the director of veterans	148
services and prescribing the form and content of the report;	149
(X) Reviewing the reports submitted to the director under	150
division (W) of this section within thirty days of receipt and	151
informing the veterans organization of any deficiencies that	152
exist in the organization's report and that funding will not be	153
released until the deficiencies have been corrected and a	154
satisfactory report submitted;	155
(Y) Releasing funds and processing payments to veterans	156
organizations when a report submitted to the director under	157
division (W) of this section has been reviewed and determined to	158
be satisfactory;	159
(Z) Furnishing copies of all reports that the director of	160
veterans services has determined have been submitted	161
satisfactorily under division (W) of this section to the	162
chairperson of the finance committees of the general assembly;	163
(AA) Investigating complaints against county veterans	164

services commissioners and county veterans service officers if 165
the director reasonably believes the investigation to be 166
appropriate and necessary; 167

(BB) Developing and maintaining a web site that is 168
accessible by veterans and their dependents and provides a link 169
to the web site of each state agency that issues a license, 170
certificate, or other authorization permitting an individual to 171
engage in an occupation or occupational activity; 172

(CC) Encouraging state agencies to conduct outreach 173
efforts through which veterans and their dependents can learn 174
about available job and education benefits; 175

(DD) Informing state agencies about changes in statutes 176
and rules that affect veterans and their dependents; 177

(EE) Assisting licensing agencies in adopting rules under 178
section 5903.03 of the Revised Code; 179

(FF) Administering the provision of grants from the 180
military injury relief fund under section 5902.05 of the Revised 181
Code; 182

(GG) Issuing a county veterans service officer 183
certification or county veterans service commissioner 184
certification in accordance with Chapter 4796. of the Revised 185
Code to an applicant if the applicant holds a license or 186
certification in another state or the applicant has satisfactory 187
work experience, a government certification, or a private 188
certification as described in that chapter as a county veterans 189
service officer or county veterans service commissioner, or in a 190
position that is the equivalent to county veterans service 191
officer or county veterans service commissioner, in a state that 192
does not issue that license or certification; 193

(HH) Administering a program for the distribution of the Ohio cold war victory medal created in section 5919.21 of the Revised Code; 194
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(II) Taking any other actions required by this chapter. 197

Sec. 5902.09. (A) An individual may apply to the director of veterans services, on a form prescribed by the director, to receive an Ohio cold war victory medal. The applicant shall include with the application a fee in an amount to be determined by the director. The director shall set the fee at an amount not greater than the cost of producing the medal. The director shall award the medal to each applicant who meets the criteria in division (A) of section 5919.21 of the Revised Code. 198
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(B) The director shall not award the Ohio cold war victory medal if a federal cold war medal or an equivalent federal medal is available to be awarded. 206
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Sec. 5919.21. (A) The Ohio cold war victory medal is created. The adjutant general shall design the medal in a manner that resembles equivalent medals adopted by other states and veterans' organizations. To be eligible to receive the medal, an individual must be all of the following: 209
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(1) A current or former member of the Ohio national guard who enlisted for a term of not less than eighteen consecutive months between September 2, 1945, and December 26, 1991; 214
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(2) A current or former member of the Ohio national guard who was a resident of this state at the time the member was enlisted, as described in division (A)(1) of this section; 217
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(3) In the case of a former member of the Ohio national guard, an individual who was discharged or released from service under conditions other than dishonorable. 220
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(B) The Ohio cold war victory medal fund is created in the 223
state treasury. The fund shall consist of all fees collected 224
from applicants for medals, as well as any appropriations made 225
by the general assembly for purposes of the medal program. The 226
fund shall be used to pay for the production of medals. 227
Investment earnings of the fund shall be credited to the fund. 228

Section 2. That existing section 5902.02 of the Revised 229
Code is hereby repealed. 230

Section 3. Section 5902.02 of the Revised Code is 231
presented in this act as a composite of the section as amended 232
by both S.B. 131 and S.B. 259 of the 134th General Assembly. The 233
General Assembly, applying the principle stated in division (B) 234
of section 1.52 of the Revised Code that amendments are to be 235
harmonized if reasonably capable of simultaneous operation, 236
finds that the composite is the resulting version of the section 237
in effect prior to the effective date of the section as 238
presented in this act. 239