

Senate Bill No. 100

(By Senators Wells, Williams, Yost, Sypolt, Foster, Plymale,
Browning, Jenkins, Unger, Laird, Stollings, Klempa and D.
Facemire)

**Interim
Bill**

[Introduced January 17, 2011; referred to the Committee on the
Military; and then to the Committee on Finance.]

A BILL to amend the Code of West Virginia, 1931, as amended, by
adding thereto a new section, designated §9A-1-11b, relating
to establishing a program to promote veteran-friendly
communities; providing that the Division of Veterans' Affairs,
in consultation with the Veterans' Council, establish a
program to assist and encourage the development, availability
and utilization of veteran-friendly services, benefits and
assistance available to veterans in communities in this state;
and annual report to the Legislature.

Be it enacted by the Legislature of West Virginia:

That the Code of West Virginia, 1931, as amended, be amended
by adding thereto a new section, designated §9A-1-11b, to read as
follows:

1 **ARTICLE 1. DIVISION OF VETERANS' AFFAIRS.**

2 **§9A-1-11b. Program to promote veteran friendly communities.**

3 (a) The division, in consultation with the Veteran's Council,
4 shall establish and implement a program to assist and encourage the
5 development, availability and utilization of veteran friendly
6 services, benefits and assistance available to veterans in
7 communities in this state provided by state, federal and local
8 government agencies as well as private entities. The program shall
9 include, but not be limited to, the following:

10 (1) Development of resources to provide awareness in
11 communities of the unique needs and issues of veterans;

12 (2) Identification of funding sources to provide funding for
13 the establishment and development of the program established in
14 this section;

15 (3) Identification of funding sources to provide funding to
16 counties, municipalities and private agencies and organizations
17 for services, benefits and resources to veterans in their
18 respective communities;

19 (4) Encouragement and assistance to counties, municipalities
20 and other government agencies to enhance their efforts to provide
21 services to veterans and to provide accessibility to services
22 available to veterans from various public and private agencies and
23 entities in their communities including, but not limited to:

24 (A) Housing and financial assistance for housing available to

1 veterans, including housing accommodations accessible to veterans
2 with disabilities;

3 (B) Healthcare services and assistance available to pay the
4 costs of healthcare for veterans;

5 (C) Employment resources and opportunities for veterans;

6 (D) Educational and vocational training resources and
7 opportunities for veterans; and

8 (E) Use of county, municipal and other government agency
9 Internet websites to provide information to veterans of the
10 availability of veteran-specific services in the community; and

11 (5) Establishment and development of a program to encourage
12 competition among counties and municipalities to develop, improve
13 and enhance services and benefits to veterans, including
14 establishment of awards and prizes in recognition of counties and
15 municipalities that excel in providing veteran services.

16 (b) The division may solicit the cooperation, assistance and
17 counsel of nonprofit organizations representing municipalities and
18 counties in the state in developing and implementing the program
19 established in this section.

20 (c) The division shall submit a report to the Joint Committee
21 on Government and Finance and to any appointed interim committee of
22 the Legislature on Veterans Affairs on October 1, annually, on the
23 progress towards implementing and administering the program
24 established in this section.

NOTE: The purpose of this bill is establish a program to promote veteran friendly communities; the bill provides that the Division of Veterans Affairs, in consultation with the Veteran's Council, shall establish a program to assist and encourage the development, availability and utilization of veteran friendly services, benefits and assistance available to veterans in communities in this state.

This section is new, therefore, strike-throughs and underscoring has been omitted.

This bill was recommended for introduction and passage during the 2011 Regular Session of the Legislature by the Select Committee on Veterans' Affairs - Interim.