2020 Session

Budget Bill - HB29 (Introduced)

Bill Order » Office of Veterans and Defense Affairs » Item 466

Department of Veterans Services

Item 466 (Not set out)	First Year - FY2019	Second Year - FY2020
Veterans Benefit Services (46700)	**$17,635,740**	**$18,170,444**
Case Management Services for Veterans Benefits (46701)	$7,996,947	$8,418,957
Virginia Veteran and Family Support Services (46702)	$4,866,878	$4,866,878
Veterans Education, Transition, and Employment Services (46703)	$3,975,415	$4,088,109
Veterans Services Fund Administration (46704)	$796,500	$796,500
Fund Sources:		
General	$15,652,998	$16,187,702
Dedicated Special Revenue	$796,500	$796,500
Federal Trust	$1,186,242	$1,186,242

Authority: Title 2.2, Chapters 20, 24, 26, and 27, Code of Virginia.

A. 1. Out of this appropriation, up to $500,000 in the first year and up to $500,000 in the second year from the general fund shall be provided to address the costs associated with support of a grant program to create employment opportunities for veterans by assisting Virginia employers in hiring and retaining veterans. The Department of Veterans Services shall develop program guidelines to ensure that the funding mechanism effectively attracts maximum participation of firms to increase the number of veterans hired.

2. Such funds shall be used to provide grants beginning July 1, 2015, to any business located in Virginia with 300 or fewer employees which has hired a veteran on or after July 1, 2014, with the following additional requirements: (a) each such veteran shall have been hired within five years of the date of his or her discharge from active military service and (b) each such veteran shall have been continuously employed by the business in a full-time job for at least one year. The grant shall equal $1,000 per qualifying business for each veteran who has been hired, and who qualifies under the provisions of this item, up to a maximum grant of $10,000 per business in the fiscal year.

3. Grants shall be issued in the order that each completed eligible application is received. In the event that the amount of eligible grants requested in a fiscal year exceeds the funds available in the Fund, such grants shall be paid in the next fiscal year in which funds are available.

4. The Department shall report no later than October 1 of each fiscal year after the program is implemented on the demand for the program, and any shortage of funding resulting from requests in excess of the available appropriation.

B. Any general fund appropriation for the Virginia Veteran and Family Support Services service area which remains unexpended at the end of the first year shall be reappropriated and allotted for expenditure for the second year.

C.1. Notwithstanding § 23.1-608, Code of Virginia, the department shall provide the State Council of Higher Education in Virginia the information these schools need to administer the Virginia Military Survivors and Dependent Education Program. The department shall retain the responsibility to certify the eligibility of those who apply for financial aid under this program.

2. No surviving spouse or child may receive the education benefits provided by § 23.1-608, Code of Virginia, and funded by this or similar state appropriations, for more than four years or its equivalent.

D. For the Virginia Values Veterans Program, the Department is hereby directed to measure (i) the program's specific effect on employers' knowledge of how to appropriately recruit and retain veterans as civilian sector employees, (ii) the program's specific effect on employers' decisions to hire more veterans than if employers did not participate in the program, and (iii) the time and effort required by employers to participate in the program. The Department shall also develop a plan to improve the effect of the Virginia Values Veterans Program on employer knowledge and hiring decisions, and reduce the time and effort required of participating employers. The plan should evaluate whether improvements should be made to the program, or whether program resources could be more effectively used by other programs to help veterans. If it is determined that program improvements should be made, the plan shall define those specific changes to the program, as well as the roles, responsibilities, and costs to both Department staff and contractors in implementing any such recommended changes. The Department shall provide its assessment and recommended plan to the Chairmen of the House Appropriations and Senate Finance Committees no later than November 1, 2018.

E. Included in the amount provided for this item is $24,000 the second year from the general fund for the Angel Wings for Veterans program.