

**SENATE CONCURRENT
RESOLUTION No. _____**

DIGEST OF INTRODUCED RESOLUTION

A CONCURRENT RESOLUTION urging the Legislative Council to assign to a study committee the topic of veterans benefits.

HERSHMAN, PAUL

_____, read first time and referred to Committee on



Introduced

Second Regular Session 118th General Assembly (2014)

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RESOLUTION No. _____**

1 A CONCURRENT RESOLUTION urging the Legislative Council
2 to assign to a study committee the topic of veterans benefits.



1 *Whereas, The Indiana Department of Veterans Affairs (IDVA) is*
 2 *committed to ensuring Hoosier veterans, guardsmen, and qualified*
 3 *family members or survivors who are eligible for benefits, receive the*
 4 *maximum benefits allowed;*

5 *Whereas, Current national rankings place Indiana near the*
 6 *bottom in most every critical category concerning veterans affairs,*
 7 *including 48th in total expenditures, compensation, and pension, 47th*
 8 *in educational rehabilitation, and 39th for medical care delivery per*
 9 *veteran;*

10 *Whereas, The primary drivers of the numbers of veterans*
 11 *receiving compensation are certified application rate, beneficiary*
 12 *population composition, and adjudication process follow through to*
 13 *include any requests for additional information from the Department*
 14 *of Veterans Affairs (VA);*

15 *Whereas, The average award level for similar disabilities varies*
 16 *across the states, and is most likely due to policies and levels of*
 17 *training at VA regional offices. The number of beneficiaries with*
 18 *maximum awards also drives variation across the states;*

19 *Whereas, States that present fully developed and complete files to*
 20 *the VA and follow through to the adjudication process are more*
 21 *successful;*

22 *Whereas, A key to maximizing use of the VA's emerging digital*
 23 *technologies is to eliminate Indiana's use of paper in the application*
 24 *process to access VA benefits. Indiana is one of the few states that do*
 25 *not have an information technology (IT) system that is bi-directional*
 26 *with the Veterans Benefits Administration (VBA); and*

27 *Whereas, Indiana must transform its application process to*
 28 *eliminate these significant disadvantages in how the IDVA develops,*
 29 *presents, and follows up on applications: Therefore,*

30 *Be it resolved by the Senate of the General Assembly*
 31 *of the State of Indiana, the House of Representatives concurring:*

32 SECTION 1. That the Legislative Council is urged to assign to a
 33 study committee the topic of veterans benefits.

34 SECTION 2. That the committee, if the topic is assigned to it, shall
 35 be charged with studying areas including, but not limited to, the
 36 following:



1 (a) How transforming Indiana's veterans benefits services can
2 increase those benefits to veterans and beneficiaries in compensation
3 and pensions, education, medical care, and other areas.

4 (b) How Indiana compares to other states in each component of
5 benefits, as reported annually by the Veterans Benefits Administration
6 (VBA), including, but not limited to:

7 (1) Total expenditures, compensation, and pensions;

8 (2) Education; and

9 (3) Medical and related care.

10 (c) How Indiana's structure of assisting beneficiaries in obtaining
11 benefits and tools may be restructured. Specifically, the following
12 areas shall be reviewed:

13 (1) Management, organization, staffing, and information
14 technology;

15 (2) Education;

16 (3) Employment;

17 (4) Compensation, pension, and other benefits; and

18 (5) Health care education and delivery.

19 SECTION 3. That the committee, if the topic is assigned to it, shall
20 operate under the direction of the Legislative Council, and shall issue
21 a final report when directed to do so by the Council.

22 SECTION 4. The Secretary of the Senate is hereby directed to
23 transmit a copy of this Resolution to the Legislative Council.

