

SENATE MILITARY AND VETERANS' AFFAIRS
COMMITTEE

STATEMENT TO
SENATE, No. 4376

with committee amendments

STATE OF NEW JERSEY

DATED: JUNE 19, 2025

The Senate Military and Veterans' Affairs Committee reports favorably and with committee amendments Senate Bill No. 4376.

As amended by the committee, this bill creates a new Department of Veterans Affairs as a principal department in the executive branch of State government. All divisions and programs concerning veterans now in the Department of Military and Veterans' Affairs are continued and transferred to the new Department of Veterans Affairs. The programs that do not concern veterans are continued in what will be referred to as the Department of Military Affairs. This bill does not create any new divisions or programs. All of the bill's provisions exist in current law and have been duplicated in this bill to provide for their recodification in a new Title 38B. Corresponding provisions of current law now codified in Title 38A are repealed.

New Jersey's veterans have maintained their proud allegiance to the United States and have fought and died to preserve and protect our freedom and way of life. The Department of Military and Veterans' Affairs, which is the current principal government agency that serves this State's veterans, has done an especially commendable job attending to this special group of residents. However, the department has significant priorities with regard to maintaining the strength and readiness of the National Guard and providing for homeland security. While many other states in the United States have a separate cabinet-level department for veterans affairs, New Jersey lacks an executive department which is concerned primarily with the needs and problems of veterans in this State. It is in the public interest to incorporate various services and programs which pertain specifically to veterans and their families and dependents into an executive agency which can serve their specific and special needs more efficiently than is possible at present.

COMMITTEE AMENDMENT

The committee amended the bill to require that the new Commission on Women Veterans submit their initial report to, and periodically advise, the Commissioner of the Department of Veterans Affairs. The amendments also make technical changes for succinctness and clarity.