

**As Passed by the Senate**

**134th General Assembly**

**Regular Session**

**2021-2022**

**S. B. No. 259**

**Senator Hoagland**

**Cosponsors: Senators Hackett, Johnson, Antonio, Blessing, Brenner, Cirino, Craig, Dolan, Gavarone, Hottinger, Kunze, Lang, Maharath, McColley, O'Brien, Peterson, Reineke, Romanchuk, Rulli, Schaffer, Sykes, Thomas, Yuko**

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**A BILL**

To amend section 5902.02 of the Revised Code to add 1  
a member of the Paralyzed Veterans of America 2  
organization to the Veterans Advisory Committee. 3

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

**Section 1.** That section 5902.02 of the Revised Code be 4  
amended to read as follows: 5

**Sec. 5902.02.** The duties of the director of veterans 6  
services shall include the following: 7

(A) Furnishing the veterans service commissions of all 8  
counties of the state copies of the state laws, rules, and 9  
legislation relating to the operation of the commissions and 10  
their offices; 11

(B) Upon application, assisting the general public in 12  
obtaining records of vital statistics pertaining to veterans or 13  
their dependents; 14

(C) Adopting rules pursuant to Chapter 119. of the Revised 15  
Code pertaining to minimum qualifications for hiring, 16

certifying, and accrediting county veterans service officers, 17  
pertaining to their required duties, and pertaining to 18  
revocation of the certification of county veterans service 19  
officers; 20

(D) Adopting rules pursuant to Chapter 119. of the Revised 21  
Code for the education, training, certification, and duties of 22  
veterans service commissioners and for the revocation of the 23  
certification of a veterans service commissioner; 24

(E) Developing and monitoring programs and agreements 25  
enhancing employment and training for veterans in single or 26  
multiple county areas; 27

(F) Developing and monitoring programs and agreements to 28  
enable county veterans service commissions to address 29  
homelessness, indigency, and other veteran-related issues 30  
individually or jointly; 31

(G) Developing and monitoring programs and agreements to 32  
enable state agencies, individually or jointly, that provide 33  
services to veterans, including the veterans' homes operated 34  
under Chapter 5907. of the Revised Code and the director of job 35  
and family services, to address homelessness, indigency, 36  
employment, and other veteran-related issues; 37

(H) Establishing and providing statistical reporting 38  
formats and procedures for county veterans service commissions; 39

(I) Publishing electronically a listing of county veterans 40  
service offices and county veterans service commissioners. The 41  
listing shall include the expiration dates of commission 42  
members' terms of office and the organizations they represent; 43  
the names, addresses, and telephone numbers of county veterans 44  
service offices; and the addresses and telephone numbers of the 45

Ohio offices and headquarters of state and national veterans 46  
service organizations. 47

(J) Establishing a veterans advisory committee to advise 48  
and assist the department of veterans services in its duties. 49  
Members shall include a member of the national guard association 50  
of the United States who is a resident of this state, a member 51  
of the paralyzed veterans of America who is a resident of this 52  
state, a member of the military officers association of America 53  
who is a resident of this state, a state representative of 54  
congressionally chartered veterans organizations referred to in 55  
section 5901.02 of the Revised Code, a representative of any 56  
other congressionally chartered state veterans organization that 57  
has at least one veterans service commissioner in the state, 58  
three representatives of the Ohio state association of county 59  
veterans service commissioners, who shall have a combined vote 60  
of one, three representatives of the state association of county 61  
veterans service officers, who shall have a combined vote of 62  
one, one representative of the county commissioners association 63  
of Ohio, who shall be a county commissioner not from the same 64  
county as any of the other county representatives, a 65  
representative of the advisory committee on women veterans, a 66  
representative of a labor organization, and a representative of 67  
the office of the attorney general. The department of veterans 68  
services shall submit to the advisory committee proposed rules 69  
for the committee's operation. The committee may review and 70  
revise these proposed rules prior to submitting them to the 71  
joint committee on agency rule review. 72

(K) Adopting, with the advice and assistance of the 73  
veterans advisory committee, policy and procedural guidelines 74  
that the veterans service commissions shall adhere to in the 75  
development and implementation of rules, policies, procedures, 76

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

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

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

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

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

federal benefits and services for Ohio veterans and their dependents, and encouraging veterans service commissions to maximize the federal benefits and services to which veterans and their dependents are entitled;

(V) Developing and maintaining relationships with the several veterans organizations, encouraging the organizations in their efforts at assisting veterans and their dependents, and advocating for adequate state subsidization of the organizations;

(W) Requiring the several veterans organizations that receive funding from the state annually, not later than the thirtieth day of July, to report to the director of veterans services and prescribing the form and content of the report;

(X) Reviewing the reports submitted to the director under division (W) of this section within thirty days of receipt and informing the veterans organization of any deficiencies that exist in the organization's report and that funding will not be released until the deficiencies have been corrected and a satisfactory report submitted;

(Y) Releasing funds and processing payments to veterans organizations when a report submitted to the director under division (W) of this section has been reviewed and determined to be satisfactory;

(Z) Furnishing copies of all reports that the director of veterans services has determined have been submitted satisfactorily under division (W) of this section to the chairperson of the finance committees of the general assembly;

(AA) Investigating complaints against county veterans services commissioners and county veterans service officers if

the director reasonably believes the investigation to be	165
appropriate and necessary;	166
(BB) Developing and maintaining a web site that is	167
accessible by veterans and their dependents and provides a link	168
to the web site of each state agency that issues a license,	169
certificate, or other authorization permitting an individual to	170
engage in an occupation or occupational activity;	171
(CC) Encouraging state agencies to conduct outreach	172
efforts through which veterans and their dependents can learn	173
about available job and education benefits;	174
(DD) Informing state agencies about changes in statutes	175
and rules that affect veterans and their dependents;	176
(EE) Assisting licensing agencies in adopting rules under	177
section 5903.03 of the Revised Code;	178
(FF) Administering the provision of grants from the	179
military injury relief fund under section 5902.05 of the Revised	180
Code;	181
(GG) Taking any other actions required by this chapter.	182
<b>Section 2.</b> That existing section 5902.02 of the Revised	183
Code is hereby repealed.	184