

THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF PENNSYLVANIA

HOUSE BILL

No. 1231 Session of 2017

INTRODUCED BY SOLOMON, GABLER, MURT, SACCONI, CHARLTON, BARRAR, CALTAGIRONE, BULLOCK, RYAN, V. BROWN, MILLARD, ROZZI, McNEILL, JAMES, STAATS, DRISCOLL, BOBACK, IRVIN, DOWLING, R. BROWN, MILNE, DONATUCCI, SIMS, ROTHMAN, DEASY, GILLEN, WHEATLEY, McCARTER, MICCARELLI, CEPHAS AND BARBIN, APRIL 17, 2017

AS AMENDED ON SECOND CONSIDERATION, HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES, JUNE 27, 2017

AN ACT

1 Amending Title 51 (Military Affairs) of the Pennsylvania
2 Consolidated Statutes, in Department of Military and Veterans
3 Affairs, providing for veterans registry.

4 The General Assembly of the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania
5 hereby enacts as follows:

6 Section 1. Title 51 of the Pennsylvania Consolidated
7 Statutes is amended by adding a section to read:

8 ~~§ 712. Veterans registry.~~

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9 ~~(a) Establishment of veterans registry. The department
10 shall establish a registry of veterans residing in this
11 Commonwealth in order to provide information on available State
12 benefits, programs and services to registered veterans.~~

13 ~~(b) Coordination with State agencies. The department shall,
14 in coordination with other State agencies that have contact with
15 veterans, establish a system for State agencies to communicate
16 to the department information about veterans who wish to be~~

1 ~~included in the registry. The department shall develop~~
2 ~~procedures and forms as deemed necessary to facilitate the~~
3 ~~implementation of this subsection, including an opt-out~~
4 ~~provision for veterans who choose not to be included in the~~
5 ~~registry.~~

6 ~~(c) Duties of State agencies. State agencies under~~
7 ~~subsection (b) shall:~~

8 ~~(1) Develop a mechanism to identify veterans the agency~~
9 ~~serves for the purpose of expanding the registry.~~

10 ~~(2) For each veteran who wishes to be included in the~~
11 ~~registry, provide to the department sufficient information~~
12 ~~for the department to add the veteran to the registry.~~

13 ~~(d) Use of information. Information collected under this~~
14 ~~section for the registry may not be sold or used for commercial~~
15 ~~purposes or otherwise used for purposes not specified under this~~
16 ~~section.~~

17 ~~(e) Report. By July 31, 2018, and each year thereafter, the~~
18 ~~department shall submit to the chairperson and minority~~
19 ~~chairperson of the Veterans Affairs and Emergency Preparedness~~
20 ~~Committee of the Senate and the chairperson and minority~~
21 ~~chairperson of the Veterans Affairs and Emergency Preparedness~~
22 ~~Committee of the House of Representatives a report on the~~
23 ~~registry to include:~~

24 ~~(1) Active membership.~~

25 ~~(2) Referrals received by other State agencies.~~

26 ~~(3) Number of individuals that opted out of inclusion in~~
27 ~~the registry.~~

28 ~~(4) Outreach expenses incurred by the department.~~

29 ~~(f) Guidelines. The Adjutant General shall adopt and~~
30 ~~promulgate guidelines necessary to carry out the provisions of~~

1 ~~this section.~~

2 § 712. VETERANS REGISTRY.

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3 (A) ESTABLISHMENT OF VETERANS REGISTRY.--THE DEPARTMENT
4 SHALL ESTABLISH A REGISTRY OF VETERANS RESIDING IN THIS
5 COMMONWEALTH IN ORDER TO PROVIDE INFORMATION ON FEDERAL, STATE
6 AND LOCAL GOVERNMENT BENEFITS, PROGRAMS AND SERVICES AVAILABLE
7 TO VETERANS AND TO LINK VETERANS WITH RESOURCES THAT CAN PROVIDE
8 ASSISTANCE. UPON REGISTRATION, IF PERMISSION IS GRANTED BY THE
9 REGISTRANT, THE REGISTRANT'S INFORMATION SHALL BE SHARED WITH
10 COUNTY DIRECTORS OF VETERANS AFFAIRS AND OTHER STATE AGENCIES.

11 (B) COORDINATION WITH STATE AGENCIES.--THE DEPARTMENT SHALL
12 COORDINATE WITH OTHER STATE AGENCIES THAT HAVE CONTACT WITH
13 VETERANS TO ESTABLISH A PAPER AND ONLINE REGISTRY FORM TO ENABLE
14 STATE AGENCIES TO ASSIST THE DEPARTMENT IN REGISTERING VETERANS
15 WHO WISH TO BE INCLUDED IN THE REGISTRY.

16 (C) DUTIES OF THE DEPARTMENT.--THE DEPARTMENT SHALL PROVIDE
17 ACCESS TO A PAPER AND ONLINE FORM WHICH CONTAINS A STATEMENT
18 INDICATING THE PURPOSE FOR THE REGISTRY. THE FORM SHALL BE
19 DEVELOPED TO OBTAIN THE FOLLOWING INFORMATION RELATING TO THE
20 VETERAN:

21 (1) PERSONAL INFORMATION, INCLUDING TITLE, FIRST, MIDDLE
22 AND LAST NAME.

23 (2) AGE, GENDER, ADDRESS AND COUNTY OF RESIDENCE.

24 (3) TEN-DIGIT PHONE NUMBER AND EMAIL ADDRESS.

25 (4) DECLARATION OF MILITARY SERVICE.

26 (5) BENEFIT AND PROGRAM INFORMATION REQUESTS FOR VARIOUS
27 BENEFITS AND PROGRAMS FOR WHICH VETERANS MAY BE ELIGIBLE.

28 (6) A SIGNED STATEMENT, OR FOR ONLINE APPLICANTS A BOX
29 THAT IS CHECKED, INDICATING THAT THE VETERAN GRANTS
30 PERMISSION FOR THE DEPARTMENT TO STORE AND SHARE THE

1 VETERAN'S INFORMATION WITH THE COUNTY DIRECTOR OF VETERANS
2 AFFAIRS FOR THE COUNTY INDICATED AND WITH OTHER STATE
3 AGENCIES TO ENSURE THAT THE COMMONWEALTH PROVIDES THE VETERAN
4 ASSISTANCE IN RECEIVING EARNED BENEFITS.

5 (7) THE STATE AGENCY WHICH ASSISTED THE VETERAN.

6 (D) DUTIES OF STATE AGENCIES.--STATE AGENCIES UNDER
7 SUBSECTION (B) SHALL:

8 (1) UTILIZE THE PAPER OR ONLINE REGISTRY FORM TO DEVELOP
9 A MECHANISM TO IDENTIFY VETERANS THE AGENCY SERVES FOR THE
10 PURPOSE OF EXPANDING THE REGISTRY.

11 (2) FOR EACH VETERAN WHO WISHES TO BE INCLUDED IN THE
12 REGISTRY, PROVIDE ASSISTANCE IN FILLING OUT THE PAPER OR
13 ONLINE REGISTRY FORM FOR THE DEPARTMENT TO ADD THE VETERAN TO
14 THE REGISTRY.

15 (3) SUBMIT A REGISTRANT'S PAPER REGISTRY FORM TO THE
16 DEPARTMENT WITHIN 30 DAYS FROM THE DATE THE VETERAN OPTS IN
17 TO THE REGISTRY.

18 (E) USE OF INFORMATION.--INFORMATION COLLECTED UNDER THIS
19 SECTION MAY NOT BE SOLD OR USED FOR COMMERCIAL PURPOSES OR USED
20 FOR PURPOSES NOT SPECIFIED UNDER THIS SECTION. INFORMATION
21 COLLECTED UNDER THIS SECTION FOR THE REGISTRY SHALL BE EXEMPT
22 FROM BEING DISCLOSED UNDER THE ACT OF FEBRUARY 14, 2008 (P.L.6,
23 NO.3), KNOWN AS THE RIGHT-TO-KNOW LAW.

24 (F) REPORT.--BY JANUARY 1, 2018, AND EACH JANUARY 1
25 THEREAFTER, THE DEPARTMENT SHALL SUBMIT TO THE CHAIRPERSON AND
26 MINORITY CHAIRPERSON OF THE VETERANS AFFAIRS AND EMERGENCY
27 PREPAREDNESS COMMITTEE OF THE SENATE AND THE CHAIRPERSON AND
28 MINORITY CHAIRPERSON OF THE VETERANS AFFAIRS AND EMERGENCY
29 PREPAREDNESS COMMITTEE OF THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES A REPORT
30 ON THE REGISTRY WHICH SHALL INCLUDE:

1 (1) THE TOTAL NUMBER OF VETERANS REGISTERED WITH THE
2 DEPARTMENT ANNUALLY.

3 (2) THE NUMBER OF REGISTRANTS RECEIVED BY EACH STATE
4 AGENCY.

5 (3) THE NUMBER OF VETERANS WHO CHOOSE NOT TO BE INCLUDED
6 IN THE REGISTRY ANNUALLY FROM EACH STATE AGENCY.

7 (4) OUTREACH EXPENSES INCURRED BY THE DEPARTMENT.

8 (G) GUIDELINES.--THE ADJUTANT GENERAL MAY ADOPT AND
9 PROMULGATE GUIDELINES NECESSARY TO CARRY OUT THE PROVISIONS OF
10 THIS SECTION.

11 Section 2. This act shall take effect in 60 days.