

SENATE BILL 3885

By Watson

AN ACT to amend Tennessee Code Annotated, Title 58, Chapter 3, Part 1, relative to the location of branch offices of the department of veterans' affairs.

BE IT ENACTED BY THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF THE STATE OF TENNESSEE:

SECTION 1. Tennessee Code Annotated, Section 58-3-106, is amended by deleting subsections (a), (d), (f) and (g) in their entireties and by substituting instead the following:

(a) The commissioner of veterans' affairs shall establish at some place in each service area in this state, a branch office in charge of an assistant commissioner or service officer, and such assistant commissioner or service officer may at least once a month visit the county seat of each county within the assistant commissioner's or service officer's service area for the purpose of conferring with and assisting veterans in obtaining the benefits granted to them by this or any other statute of this state or of the United States. In addition thereto, such assistant commissioner or service officer shall actively cooperate with any and all veterans' organizations in each county in the assistant commissioner's or service officer's service area in the preparation and presentation of claims on behalf of veterans, and should any county or city or combination thereof provide a service officer to aid honorably discharged veterans, such assistant commissioner or service officer shall likewise actively cooperate with them and shall cooperate with any local organization on questions of placement of veterans in the local employment. Such service officers shall be appointed by the commissioner, with the approval of the governor, and where possible, shall be honorably discharged veterans of some war in which the United States was a participant and shall be as well qualified for the duties imposed on them herein as possible.

(d) The commissioner is authorized to rent suitable quarters at some point in each service area, if the same cannot be procured otherwise in public buildings, as an office for such assistant commissioner or service officer and may employ in connection therewith as well as in connection with the principal office, such clerical assistance as may be found necessary, all with the approval of the governor, the salaries to be paid to be commensurate with those paid for like services in other departments of the state.

(f) In addition, the commissioner, may upon the approval of the governor, establish additional offices in any service area where the commissioner finds that one (1) assistant commissioner or service officer is incapable of efficiently handling the volume of work placed upon the commissioner by the provisions of §§ 58-3-104 — 58-3-108.

(g) For purposes of this section, “service area” means an area of the state that, when measured in relation to the total area of the state, is of a size that veterans residing within the area have timely access to needed services.

(h) The commissioner shall establish such service areas as are necessary to effectuate the provisions of §§ 58-3-104 — 58-3-108.

SECTION 2. This act shall take effect upon becoming a law, the public welfare requiring it.