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# A BILL FOR AN ACT

RELATING TO VETERANS.

**BE IT ENACTED BY THE LEGISLATURE OF THE STATE OF HAWAII:**

1           SECTION 1. The legislature finds that a reliable and  
2 effective method of communicating important information to  
3 Hawaii's military veterans, particularly those veterans  
4 returning from deployment to the Persian Gulf, Afghanistan, and  
5 Iraq, and their families is lacking. This lack of communication  
6 prevents veterans from all branches of the military from being  
7 informed of significant outreach services that are available for  
8 veterans and their families, upcoming veteran-related events in  
9 the community, and the dates of various military ceremonies.

10           Outreach and counseling services are extremely important to  
11 our men and women returning from combat, many of whom will be  
12 struggling with some form of redeployment issues due to the  
13 dangers they faced carrying out their military duties, and the  
14 prolonged separation from family and friends. Many will  
15 experience an unexpected sense of detachment, irritability, and  
16 other stress-related symptoms. At least fifteen per cent of our  
17 current military personnel will suffer from some form of combat



1 stress. It is critical that our returning veterans are aware of  
2 services and support offered to them, as well as relevant  
3 ceremonies and events, upon their return from duty. The  
4 Department of Veterans Affairs is moving its residential stress  
5 care program for long-term patients from Hilo to Oahu, where the  
6 majority of returning veterans live. This move will increase  
7 both inpatient and outpatient services available for veterans on  
8 Oahu.

9 Presently, the office of veterans' services, located within  
10 the department of defense, lacks sufficient funding to publish a  
11 newsletter that would disseminate this and other related  
12 important information regarding support services, programs, and  
13 events available to military veterans and their families. The  
14 State of Hawaii owes our returning armed forces, national guard,  
15 and reserve veterans meaningful opportunities that provide  
16 support for them and express the State's deep gratitude and  
17 appreciation for the services that the veterans have provided  
18 for our country.

19 The purpose of this Act is to provide information to  
20 veterans and their families regarding available outreach  
21 services and programs.



1           SECTION 2. There is appropriated out of the general  
2 revenues of the State of Hawaii the sum of \$100,000, or so much  
3 thereof as may be necessary for fiscal year 2007-2008, and the  
4 same sum, or so much thereof as may be necessary for fiscal year  
5 2008-2009, for the office of veterans services to cover the cost  
6 of staff, printing, and distribution of a newsletter, published  
7 quarterly for each year, that will inform veterans of veterans'  
8 issues, including any changes in benefits, the availability of  
9 supportive services and programs, and relevant events and  
10 ceremonies.

11           SECTION 3. The sums appropriated shall be expended by the  
12 office of veteran services for the purposes of this Act.

13           SECTION 4. This Act shall take effect on July 1, 2007.



**Report Title:**

Veterans; DOD Newsletters; Appropriation

**Description:**

Appropriates funds to the department of defense for veterans' newsletters to inform returning veterans of benefit changes and the availability of supportive services and programs. (SD1)

