



**Senate Fiscal Agency**  
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**BILL ANALYSIS**

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House Bill 6403 (Substitute H-1 as passed by the House)  
Sponsor: Representative Jason Wentworth  
House Committee: Military and Veterans Affairs  
Senate Committee: Veterans, Military Affairs and Homeland Security

Date Completed: 12-5-18

**CONTENT**

**The bill would amend Public Act 192 of 1953, which governs the Veteran's Service Fund, to do the following:**

- **Amend references to "county department of veterans' affairs" to refer to "county".**
- **Require the base amount of grant funding to be provided in a lump sum by December 31 of each year, and require the initial base amount to be provided by January 31, 2019.**
- **Revise the definition of "veteran service operations".**

Under the Act, the Michigan Veterans Affairs Agency must create and operate a grant program that provides grants to counties for county veteran service operations. The Agency must make grants from the Fund, upon appropriation, to each county department of veterans' affairs that meets specified conditions. Instead, the Agency would have to make grants to each county that met the specified conditions.

The Act also specifies that the total disbursement for each grant must be determined by combining a base amount of \$25,000 and a per capita amount according to the number of veterans residing in each county.

If the amount remaining in the Fund after accounting for the base disbursements of \$25,000 is less than the amount obtained by multiplying \$1,000 by the number of counties receiving grants, the Agency shall not perform a calculation for per capita disbursements and could not disburse the per capita portion of grant funds.

Under the bill, the disbursement of grants would be subject to the limitation on per capita disbursements, the base amount of \$25,000 to be provided in a lump sum distribution by December 31 of each year. The initial base amount would have to be provided by January 31, 2019.

Currently, "veteran service operations" means assistance and programming to meet the needs of veterans in the State. The term includes providing advice, advocacy, and assistance to veterans, service members, dependents, or survivors by an accredited veteran services officer to obtain United States Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) health, financial, or memorial benefits for which they are eligible.

Under the bill, "veteran service operations" would mean assistance and programming of any kind to meet the needs of veterans in the State. The term would include providing assistance, programming, and services for the purpose of assisting veterans in the State and providing advice, advocacy, and assistance to veterans, service members, dependents, or survivors by an accredited veteran services officer to obtain VA health, financial, or memorial benefits for which they were eligible.

MCL 35.623a

Legislative Analyst: Tyler VanHuyse

### **FISCAL IMPACT**

The bill would have no fiscal impact on State government, but would make some adjustments that would have an impact on county governments in regard to the County Veteran Service Fund grants to counties, a program funded at \$2.1 million for fiscal year 2018-19 under (PA) 207 of 2018. While no funds have yet been disbursed from the Fund, the bill would remove a requirement that for a county to receive a grant, it would have to have established a formal "department of Veterans' Affairs." Though nearly all counties have offices dedicated to assisting veterans, many do not have an official department for those purposes. Thus, the bill would open up eligibility for a \$25,000 base grant, plus an additional amount based on per capita number of veterans residing in a county, to some counties not already eligible under the Act.

The bill also would designate a time frame for distribution of the \$25,000 base grant, which would be not later than December 31 of each year, with the initial base grant to be provided by January 31, 2019. It also should be noted that this bill would not appropriate funds for distribution of the grants for county veteran service operations. For continued disbursement of these grants beyond the \$2.1 million appropriated in PA 207, additional appropriations would be required.

Fiscal Analyst: Bruce Baker

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This analysis was prepared by nonpartisan Senate staff for use by the Senate in its deliberations and does not constitute an official statement of legislative intent.