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H.P. 844

House of Representatives, March 28, 2017

An Act To Amend the Veterans Service Laws

Submitted by the Department of Defense, Veterans and Emergency Management pursuant to Joint Rule 204.

Reference to the Committee on Veterans and Legal Affairs suggested and ordered printed.

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Robert B. Hunt".

ROBERT B. HUNT
Clerk

Presented by Representative LUCHINI of Ellsworth.

1 **Be it enacted by the People of the State of Maine as follows:**

2 **Sec. 1. 37-B MRSA §4**, as repealed and replaced by PL 2013, c. 251, §2, is
3 amended to read:

4 **§4. Directors of bureaus**

5 **1. Maine Bureau of Veterans' Services.** The Director of the Maine Bureau of
6 ~~Maine~~ Veterans' Services is appointed by the commissioner and serves at the pleasure of
7 the commissioner.

8 **2. Maine Emergency Management Agency.** The Director of the Maine Emergency
9 Management Agency is appointed by the Governor upon the recommendation of the
10 commissioner, reports administratively to the commissioner and serves at the pleasure of
11 the Governor.

12 The Director of the Maine Bureau of ~~Maine~~ Veterans' Services and the Director of
13 the Maine Emergency Management Agency shall perform civilian duties as assigned by
14 the commissioner or Governor.

15 **Sec. 2. 37-B MRSA §501, first ¶**, as amended by PL 2015, c. 465, Pt. A, §2, is
16 further amended to read:

17 The Maine Bureau of ~~Maine~~ Veterans' Services, referred to in this chapter as the
18 "bureau," is established and shall provide informational services, program assistance,
19 memorial facilities and financial aid to veterans in the State and their dependents in order
20 to ensure that they receive all entitlements due under the law, are relieved to the extent
21 possible of financial hardship, receive every opportunity for self-improvement through
22 higher education and are afforded proper recognition for their service and sacrifice to the
23 Nation. The bureau shall serve as the primary source of information for veterans in the
24 State regarding all services, benefits and honors administered by the State and, to the
25 maximum extent possible, services and benefits provided by the United States
26 Department of Veterans Affairs, veterans' service organizations and other organizations
27 dedicated to serving veterans.

28 **Sec. 3. 37-B MRSA §502**, as amended by PL 1997, c. 455, §18, is further
29 amended to read:

30 **§502. Director of Maine Bureau of Veterans' Services**

31 The Director of the Maine Bureau of ~~Maine~~ Veterans' Services, referred to in this
32 chapter as the "director," shall direct the operation of the bureau.

33 **Sec. 4. 37-B MRSA §505, sub-§1-A**, as amended by PL 2009, c. 415, Pt. A,
34 §§24 and 25, is repealed and the following enacted in its place:

35 **1-A. Financial assistance.** The following provisions govern financial assistance to
36 veterans.

37 D. The bureau may accept money in order to provide financial assistance to veterans.

1 E. The bureau may award grants to organizations that provide assistance to veterans
2 in this State such as housing or emergency assistance.

3 The department may adopt rules to implement this subsection. Rules adopted pursuant to
4 this paragraph are major substantive rules as defined in Title 5, chapter 375, subchapter 2-
5 A.

6 **Sec. 5. Maine Revised Statutes headnote amended; revision clause.** In the
7 Maine Revised Statutes, Title 37-B, chapter 7, in the chapter headnote, the words "bureau
8 of maine veterans' services" are amended to read "maine bureau of veterans' services" and
9 the Revisor of Statutes shall implement this revision when updating, publishing or
10 republishing the statutes.

11 **SUMMARY**

12 This bill makes the following changes to the laws governing veterans' services.

13 1. It changes the name of the Bureau of Maine Veterans' Services to the Maine
14 Bureau of Veterans' Services.

15 2. It removes the authority of the bureau to provide grants of temporary and
16 emergency cash assistance to veterans. It authorizes the bureau to accept money to
17 provide financial assistance to veterans and to award grants to organizations that provide
18 assistance to veterans such as housing or emergency assistance.