

1 State of Arkansas
2 92nd General Assembly
3 Regular Session, 2019
4

As Engrossed: H3/7/19

A Bill

SENATE BILL 4

5 By: Senator T. Garner
6 By: Representative Wardlaw
7

For An Act To Be Entitled

9 AN ACT TO CREATE THE ARKANSAS LEGISLATIVE STUDY ON
10 VETERANS AFFAIRS; AND FOR OTHER PURPOSES.
11

Subtitle

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14 TO CREATE THE ARKANSAS LEGISLATIVE STUDY
15 ON VETERANS AFFAIRS.
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18 BE IT ENACTED BY THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF THE STATE OF ARKANSAS:
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20 SECTION 1. TEMPORARY LANGUAGE. DO NOT CODIFY. Arkansas Legislative
21 Study on Veterans Affairs – Creation – Purpose.

22 (a) The House Committee on Aging, Children and Youth, and Legislative
23 and Military Affairs and the Senate Committee on State Agencies and
24 Governmental Affairs shall meet jointly to conduct the Arkansas Legislative
25 Study on Veterans Affairs.

26 (b)(1) The chair of the House Committee on Aging, Children and Youth,
27 and Legislative and Military Affairs and the chair of the Senate Committee on
28 State Agencies and Governmental Affairs shall call the first joint meeting of
29 the House Committee on Aging, Children and Youth, Legislative and Military
30 Affairs and the Senate Committee on State Agencies and Governmental Affairs
31 to begin the study within sixty (60) days of the effective date of this act.

32 (2) In order to interact directly with veterans throughout the
33 State of Arkansas, the House Committee on Aging, Children and Youth,
34 Legislative and Military Affairs and the Senate Committee on State Agencies
35 and Governmental Affairs may hold meetings at various sites throughout the
36 state.



1 (3) Joint meetings of the House Committee on Aging, Children and
2 Youth, Legislative and Military Affairs and the Senate Committee on State
3 Agencies and Governmental Affairs for the purpose of conducting the study
4 shall be held at least one (1) time every three (3) months but may occur more
5 often at the call of the chairs.

6 (4) The members of the House Committee on Aging, Children and
7 Youth, Legislative and Military Affairs and the Senate Committee on State
8 Agencies and Governmental Affairs shall be paid per diem and mileage as
9 authorized by law for attendance at meetings of interim committees of the
10 General Assembly.

11 (c)(1) The purpose of the study is to examine veterans' issues within
12 the State of Arkansas, including without limitation the occurrence of suicide
13 among the veteran population in this state.

14 (2) In carrying out the purpose of this act, the House Committee
15 on Aging, Children and Youth, Legislative and Military Affairs and the Senate
16 Committee on State Agencies and Governmental Affairs shall:

17 (A) Study risk factors for suicide in veterans;

18 (B) Review and research options for preventing or reducing
19 the occurrence of suicide among the veteran population in the state;

20 (C) Examine mental health care available to veterans
21 within the state;

22 (D) Conduct at least one (1) town-hall-style meeting to
23 hear from veterans in the state and their concerns regarding mental health
24 care and other issues affecting veterans in the state;

25 (E) Engage the following:

26 (i) The Department of Veterans Affairs;

27 (ii) The Department of Health; and

28 (iii) Mental health professionals licensed to
29 practice in this state;

30 (F) Review best practices among other states;

31 (G) Review methods to create a statewide program targeting
32 suicide prevention and preventative mental health care for veterans; and

33 (H) Study and review other issues that the House Committee
34 on Aging, Children and Youth, Legislative and Military Affairs and the Senate
35 Committee on State Agencies and Governmental Affairs deem relevant to
36 improving the productivity and wellness of veterans residing in this state.

1 (d) The House Committee on Aging, Children and Youth, Legislative and
2 Military Affairs and the Senate Committee on State Agencies and Governmental
3 Affairs may establish an advisory board to assist the committees in
4 accomplishing the purposes of the study as stated in this act. If the House
5 Committee on Aging, Children and Youth, Legislative and Military Affairs and
6 the Senate Committee on State Agencies and Governmental Affairs determine
7 that creation of an advisory board would be beneficial, the House Committee
8 on Aging, Children and Youth, Legislative and Military Affairs and the Senate
9 Committee on State Agencies and Governmental Affairs shall adopt rules
10 regarding the membership and duties of the advisory board.

11 (e) The House Committee on Aging, Children and Youth, Legislative and
12 Military Affairs and the Senate Committee on State Agencies and Governmental
13 Affairs shall file a final written report of their activities, findings, and
14 recommendations with the Legislative Council on or before December 1, 2020,
15 and the study shall be complete upon that submission.

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17 /s/T. Garner
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20 APPROVED: 3/26/19
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