

1 **HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES - FLOOR VERSION**

2 STATE OF OKLAHOMA

3 1st Session of the 59th Legislature (2023)

4 ENGROSSED SENATE
5 BILL NO. 547

By: Pugh of the Senate

and

West (Josh) of the House

6
7
8
9 An Act relating to veterans; requiring Oklahoma
10 Department of Veterans Affairs to represent certain
11 interests; authorizing Department to request
12 engagement of Attorney General upon certain
13 determination; requiring review of certain
14 complaints; authorizing intervention of Attorney
15 General upon request by Department; providing for
16 codification; and declaring an emergency.

17 BE IT ENACTED BY THE PEOPLE OF THE STATE OF OKLAHOMA:

18 SECTION 1. NEW LAW A new section of law to be codified
19 in the Oklahoma Statutes as Section 63.23 of Title 72, unless there
20 is created a duplication in numbering, reads as follows:

21 A. The Oklahoma Department of Veterans Affairs shall represent
22 and protect the collective interests of military veterans in this
23 state. The Department may request the engagement of the Attorney
24 General on behalf of an individual veteran or a collective group of
 veterans upon:

1 1. Receiving a complaint of improperly withheld or revoked
2 benefits or breaches of trust in the administration of funds by the
3 United States Department of Veterans Affairs;

4 2. Conducting a thorough review of the complaint; and

5 3. Determining that the Department has exhausted its ability to
6 intervene on behalf of the veteran or veterans.

7 B. Upon request from the Department pursuant to subsection A of
8 this section, the Attorney General may, at his or her discretion,
9 intervene on behalf of the veteran or veterans.

10 SECTION 2. It being immediately necessary for the preservation
11 of the public peace, health or safety, an emergency is hereby
12 declared to exist, by reason whereof this act shall take effect and
13 be in full force from and after its passage and approval.

14
15 COMMITTEE REPORT BY: COMMITTEE ON VETERANS AND MILITARY AFFAIRS,
16 dated 04/04/2023 - DO PASS.