



State of Wisconsin
2015 - 2016 LEGISLATURE

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2015 SENATE BILL 668

February 1, 2016 - Introduced by Senator WANGGAARD, cosponsored by Representatives SKOWRONSKI, PETRYK, KOOYENGA and A. OTT. Referred to Committee on Transportation and Veterans Affairs.

1 **AN ACT** *to repeal* 20.485 (1) (gd), 20.485 (1) (mn), 20.485 (1) (u), 20.485 (2) (b),
2 20.485 (2) (d), 20.485 (2) (e), 20.485 (2) (vy), 20.485 (2) (yg), 20.485 (3) (v), 20.485
3 (3) (w), 45.03 (13) (j), 45.03 (13) (k), 45.70 (1b) (b), 45.70 (1m), 45.80 (5) (e), 45.80
4 (6) (intro.), 45.80 (7), 45.80 (8), 45.805 and 45.82 (3); **to renumber** 20.485 (1)
5 (d), 20.485 (3) (sm), 45.50 (2b), 45.51 (8), 45.51 (11), 45.51 (12), 45.80 (6) (a) and
6 45.80 (6) (b); **to renumber and amend** 20.485 (1) (kg), 45.51 (6m), 45.51 (7),
7 45.51 (10) and 45.70 (1b) (a); **to amend** 20.485 (1) (g), 20.485 (1) (gk), 20.485
8 (1) (h), 20.485 (1) (hm), 20.485 (1) (kg), 20.485 (1) (t), 20.485 (2) (a) (title), 20.485
9 (2) (rm), 20.485 (2) (rp), 20.485 (2) (vx), 20.485 (2) (vx), 20.485 (2) (z) (title),
10 20.485 (4) (g), 20.485 (4) (m), 20.485 (5) (mn) (title), 20.485 (5) (wd) (title), 25.36
11 (1), 25.37, 45.01 (9), 45.02 (2) (intro.), 45.03 (3) (a), 45.03 (5) (a) 1., 45.03 (5) (a)
12 2., 45.03 (5) (c) 1. a., 45.03 (5) (c) 1. b., 45.03 (5) (c) 1. c., 45.03 (5) (c) 3., 45.03
13 (5) (c) 4., 45.03 (12) (a), 45.03 (12) (b), 45.03 (15), 45.21 (1), 45.37 (1), 45.37 (2),
14 45.37 (4) (a), 45.37 (4) (b) 1., 45.37 (4) (b) 2., 45.37 (6) (a) 2., 45.37 (6) (c) 2., 45.37

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1 (7) (a) (intro.), 45.37 (7) (b), 45.37 (10) (a), 45.43 (title) and (1), 45.47 (1), 45.50
2 (4) (a), 45.51 (3) (b), 45.51 (3) (c) 1. d., 45.51 (3) (c) 1m. c., 45.51 (3) (c) 2., 45.57
3 (1), 45.62 (2), 45.70 (2) (b), 45.80 (title), 45.80 (1) (a), 45.80 (1) (c), 45.80 (4), 45.80
4 (5) (intro.), 45.81 (2), 45.81 (3) (a), 45.81 (4), 45.81 (6), 45.82 (1), 45.82 (2), 45.84
5 and 851.09; **to repeal and recreate** 20.485 (1) (b) (title), 20.485 (1) (gk), 20.485
6 (2) (u) (title), 20.485 (5) (c) (title) and 20.485 (5) (zm) (title); and **to create** 19.56
7 (3) (g), 20.485 (1) (fm), 45.01 (4m), 45.01 (4p), 45.50 (2b) (b), 45.80 (5) (f), 45.80
8 (9) and 45.805 of the statutes; **relating to:** powers of officers and employees of
9 the Department of Veterans Affairs, powers of the Board of Veterans Affairs,
10 employment of veterans regional coordinators and claims officers, and making
11 appropriations.

Analysis by the Legislative Reference Bureau

This bill makes various changes to the laws governing veterans affairs, including changes to the powers of certain state public officials of the Department of Veterans Affairs, changes to the powers of the Board of Veterans Affairs, and changes regarding the maintenance of veterans homes.

This bill allows a state public official who is an officer or employee of DVA to solicit, receive, and retain on behalf of the state anything of value for the purpose of supporting veterans homes and members and veterans programs, benefits, and services.

The bill transfers most of the powers of the Board of Veterans Affairs to DVA. Under current law, the board has various powers, including creating policies and making determinations relating to the disposition of moneys, the making of loans, and the acquisition and conveyance of buildings and real property.

The bill directs DVA to provide annually \$42,000 to the town of Dover to reimburse the town for the costs of municipal services provided to the Wisconsin Veterans Home at Union Grove. The bill also creates a full-time position within DVA to act as facilities manager at the Wisconsin Veterans Home at Union Grove.

The bill also provides that DVA may approve a county veterans service consortium to administer veterans benefits and services and makes county veterans service officers optional for counties. Current law requires each county to elect or appoint a county veterans service officer.

Finally, the bill makes various technical changes to laws governing veterans affairs, including repealing obsolete or outdated appropriations.

SENATE BILL 668**SECTION 6**

1 20.485 (1) (g) *Home exchange*. The amounts in the schedule for the purchase
2 of the necessary materials, supplies and equipment for the operation of the home
3 exchange, and compensation for members' labor. All moneys received from the sale
4 of products authorized by s. ~~45.51(7)~~ 45.50 (12) shall be credited to this
5 appropriation.

6 **SECTION 7.** 20.485 (1) (gd) of the statutes is repealed.

7 **SECTION 8.** 20.485 (1) (gk) of the statutes, as affected by 2015 Wisconsin Act 55,
8 section 768k, is amended to read:

9 20.485 (1) (gk) *Institutional Homes operations*. The amounts in the schedule
10 for the care of the members of the Wisconsin veterans homes under s. 45.50, for the
11 payment of stipends under s. 45.50 (2m) (f), for the transfer of moneys to the
12 appropriation account under s. 20.435 (4) (ky) for payment of the state share of the
13 medical assistance costs related to the provision of stipends under s. 45.50 (2m) (f),
14 for the payment of assistance to indigent veterans under s. 45.43 to allow them to
15 reside at the Wisconsin Veterans Home at Union Grove, for the transfer of moneys
16 to the appropriation accounts under ~~par. (kg) and par. (kj) and sub. (2) (ks)~~, and for
17 the payment of grants under s. 45.82. Not more than 1 percent of the moneys credited
18 to this appropriation account may be used for the payment of assistance to indigent
19 veterans under s. 45.43. All moneys received under par. (m) and s. ~~45.51(7)(b) and~~
20 ~~(8)~~ 45.50 (12) (b) and (13) and all moneys received for the care of members under
21 medical assistance, as defined in s. 49.43 (8), shall be credited to this appropriation
22 account.

23 **SECTION 9.** 20.485 (1) (gk) of the statutes, as affected by 2015 Wisconsin Act 55,
24 section 768kb, and 2015 Wisconsin Act (this act), is repealed and recreated to read:

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1 20.485 (1) (gk) *Homes operations.* The amounts in the schedule for the care of
2 the members of the Wisconsin veterans homes under s. 45.50, for the payment of
3 stipends under s. 45.50 (2m) (f), for the transfer of moneys to the appropriation
4 account under s. 20.435 (4) (ky) for payment of the state share of the medical
5 assistance costs related to the provision of stipends under s. 45.50 (2m) (f), for the
6 payment of assistance to indigent veterans under s. 45.43 to allow them to reside at
7 the Wisconsin Veterans Home at Union Grove, for the transfer of moneys to the
8 appropriation account under sub. (2) (ks), and for the payment of grants under s.
9 45.82. Not more than 1 percent of the moneys credited to this appropriation account
10 may be used for the payment of assistance to indigent veterans under s. 45.43. All
11 moneys received under par. (m) and s. 45.50 (12) (b) and (13) and all moneys received
12 for the care of members under medical assistance, as defined in s. 49.43 (8), shall be
13 credited to this appropriation account.

14 **SECTION 10.** 20.485 (1) (h) of the statutes is amended to read:

15 20.485 (1) (h) *Gifts, grants, and bequests.* All moneys received under s. 45.51
16 ~~(10) 45.50 (14) and (11) (15)~~, or any moneys received by gifts, grants, or bequests, to
17 carry out the purposes of ss. 45.50 and 45.51.

18 **SECTION 11.** 20.485 (1) (hm) of the statutes is amended to read:

19 20.485 (1) (hm) *Gifts ~~and grants~~, grants, and bequests.* All moneys received
20 from gifts ~~and grants~~, grants, or bequests, specifically for the purpose of s. 45.50 (2m)
21 (d), to carry out the purpose of s. 45.50 (2m) (d).

22 **SECTION 12.** 20.485 (1) (kg) of the statutes is renumbered 20.485 (2) (ks) and
23 amended to read:

24 20.485 (2) (ks) *Grants to counties.* The amounts in the schedule for the
25 payments of grants made under s. 45.82 (1) to (3). All moneys transferred from the

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1 appropriation account under ~~par. sub. (1)~~ (gk) shall be credited to this appropriation
2 account.

3 **SECTION 13.** 20.485 (1) (kg) of the statutes is amended to read:

4 20.485 (1) (kg) *Grants to counties.* The amounts in the schedule for the
5 payments of grants made under s. 45.82 (1) ~~to (3)~~ and (2). All moneys transferred
6 from the appropriation account under par. (gk) shall be credited to this appropriation
7 account.

8 **SECTION 14.** 20.485 (1) (mn) of the statutes is repealed.

9 **SECTION 15.** 20.485 (1) (t) of the statutes is amended to read:

10 20.485 (1) (t) *Veterans homes member accounts.* From the Wisconsin veterans
11 homes members fund, all moneys received under s. 25.37 to make payments as
12 provided under s. 45.51 (8), (10), 45.50 (13), (14), and (11) (15).

13 **SECTION 16.** 20.485 (1) (u) of the statutes is repealed.

14 **SECTION 17.** 20.485 (2) (a) (title) of the statutes is amended to read:

15 20.485 (2) (a) (title) *General program operations; loans and aids fund*
16 *operations.*

17 **SECTION 18.** 20.485 (2) (b) of the statutes is repealed.

18 **SECTION 19.** 20.485 (2) (d) of the statutes is repealed.

19 **SECTION 20.** 20.485 (2) (e) of the statutes is repealed.

20 **SECTION 21.** 20.485 (2) (rm) of the statutes is amended to read:

21 20.485 (2) (rm) *Veterans assistance programs; fish and game vouchers housing*
22 *and recovery programs.* Biennially, the amounts in the schedule for general program
23 operations of the veterans assistance program housing and recovery programs under
24 s. 45.43, for grants under s. 45.03 (13) (j), and for reimbursements to the department
25 of natural resources under s. 29.1945 (2).

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1 **SECTION 22.** 20.485 (2) (rp) of the statutes is amended to read:

2 20.485 (2) (rp) *Veterans assistance program receipts housing and recovery*
3 *programs fees.* All moneys received from fees under s. 45.43 (2) for the provision of
4 assistance housing and recovery programs to veterans under s. 45.43 (1).

5 **SECTION 23.** 20.485 (2) (u) (title) of the statutes is repealed and recreated to
6 read:

7 20.485 (2) (u) (title) *Veteran trust fund operations.*

8 **SECTION 24.** 20.485 (2) (vx) of the statutes is amended to read:

9 20.485 (2) (vx) *County grants.* The amounts in the schedule for payment of
10 grants under s. 45.82 and for county veterans services consortium grants under s.
11 45.805.

12 **SECTION 25.** 20.485 (2) (vx) of the statutes, as affected by 2015 Wisconsin Act
13 (this act), is amended to read:

14 20.485 (2) (vx) *County grants.* The amounts in the schedule for payment of
15 grants under s. 45.82 ~~and for county veterans services consortium grants under s.~~
16 ~~45.805.~~

17 **SECTION 26.** 20.485 (2) (vy) of the statutes is repealed.

18 **SECTION 27.** 20.485 (2) (yg) of the statutes is repealed.

19 **SECTION 28.** 20.485 (2) (z) (title) of the statutes is amended to read:

20 20.485 (2) (z) (title) *Gifts, grants, and bequests.*

21 **SECTION 29.** 20.485 (3) (sm) of the statutes is renumbered 20.485 (2) (se).

22 **SECTION 30.** 20.485 (3) (v) of the statutes is repealed.

23 **SECTION 31.** 20.485 (3) (w) of the statutes is repealed.

24 **SECTION 32.** 20.485 (4) (g) of the statutes is amended to read:

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1 20.485 (4) (g) *Cemetery operations*. The amounts in the schedule for the care
2 and operation of the veterans memorial cemeteries under s. 45.61 other than those
3 costs provided under pars. (q) and (r). All moneys received under s. 45.61 (3) and from
4 the estate of decedents under s. 45.61 (5) shall be credited to this appropriation
5 account.

6 **SECTION 33.** 20.485 (4) (m) of the statutes is amended to read:

7 20.485 (4) (m) *Federal aid; cemetery operations and burials*. All moneys
8 received from the federal government for specific veterans programs other than for
9 the care of veterans at the Wisconsin Veterans Home at King and veterans facilities,
10 for such purposes, and all moneys received from the federal government for the
11 operation of veterans memorial cemeteries under s. 45.61 as authorized by the
12 governor under s. 16.54, to be used for that purpose.

13 **SECTION 34.** 20.485 (5) (c) (title) of the statutes is repealed and recreated to
14 read:

15 20.485 (5) (c) (title) *Museum operations; general fund*.

16 **SECTION 35.** 20.485 (5) (mn) (title) of the statutes is amended to read:

17 20.485 (5) (mn) (title) *Federal projects; museum acquisitions and operations*.

18 **SECTION 36.** 20.485 (5) (wd) (title) of the statutes is amended to read:

19 20.485 (5) (wd) (title) *Operation of Wisconsin Veterans Museum operations*.

20 **SECTION 37.** 20.485 (5) (zm) (title) of the statutes is repealed and recreated to
21 read:

22 20.485 (5) (zm) (title) *Gifts, grants, and bequests*.

23 **SECTION 38.** 25.36 (1) of the statutes, as affected by 2015 Wisconsin Act 55, is
24 amended to read:

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1 25.36 (1) Except as provided in sub. (2), all moneys appropriated or transferred
2 by law shall constitute the veterans trust fund which shall be used for the lending
3 of money to the mortgage loan repayment fund under s. 45.37 (5) (a) 12. and for the
4 veterans programs under ss. 20.485 (2) (m), (tm), (u), ~~(vy)~~, and (z), and (5) (mn), (v),
5 (vo), and (zm), 45.03 (19), 45.07, 45.20, 45.21, 45.40 (1m), 45.41, 45.42, 45.43, and
6 45.82 and administered by the department of veterans affairs, including all moneys
7 received from the federal government for the benefit of veterans or their dependents,
8 and for the veteran grant jobs pilot program under s. 38.31 administered by the
9 technical college system board; all moneys paid as interest on and repayment of loans
10 under the post-war rehabilitation fund; soldiers rehabilitation fund, veterans
11 housing funds as they existed prior to July 1, 1961; all moneys paid as interest on
12 and repayment of loans under this fund; all moneys paid as expenses for, interest on,
13 and repayment of veterans trust fund stabilization loans under s. 45.356, 1995 stats.;;
14 all moneys paid as expenses for, interest on, and repayment of veterans personal
15 loans; the net proceeds from the sale of mortgaged properties related to veterans
16 personal loans; all mortgages issued with the proceeds of the 1981 veterans home
17 loan revenue bond issuance purchased with moneys in the veterans trust fund; all
18 moneys received from the state investment board under s. 45.42 (8) (b); all moneys
19 received from the veterans mortgage loan repayment fund under s. 45.37 (7) (a) and
20 (c); and all gifts of money received by the board of veterans affairs for the purposes
21 of this fund.

22 **SECTION 39.** 25.37 of the statutes is amended to read:

23 **25.37 Wisconsin veterans homes members fund.** There is established a
24 separate nonlapsible trust fund designated as the Wisconsin veterans homes
25 members fund. The fund shall consist of moneys belonging to persons residing in

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1 Wisconsin veterans homes, that are paid to the homes, and that are transferred into
2 the fund by the department of veterans affairs under s. ~~45.51 (8)~~ 45.50 (13).

3 **SECTION 40.** 45.01 (4m) of the statutes is created to read:

4 45.01 (4m) "County veterans service consortium" means a group of counties
5 that enters into an agreement under s. 66.0301 to collectively administer veterans
6 benefits and services, subject to s. 45.805.

7 **SECTION 41.** 45.01 (4p) of the statutes is created to read:

8 45.01 (4p) "County veterans consortium commission" means the commission
9 established under s. 45.805 (2).

10 **SECTION 42.** 45.01 (9) of the statutes is amended to read:

11 45.01 (9) "Permanently and totally disabled veteran" means a person who is
12 receiving 100 percent disability compensation from the U.S. department of veterans
13 affairs under 38 USC ~~301 to 315, 331 to 337, and 350 to 362~~ 1110 to 1155, due to a
14 permanent and total service-connected disability.

15 **SECTION 43.** 45.02 (2) (intro.) of the statutes is amended to read:

16 45.02 (2) (intro.) Except as provided in sub. (3) and s. 45.51 (~~6m~~) (1m), to be
17 eligible for benefits under this chapter an applicant shall be a resident of and living
18 in this state at the time of making application or the veteran from whom the
19 applicant derives eligibility is deceased, and the veteran from whom eligibility is
20 derived meets one of the following conditions:

21 **SECTION 44.** 45.03 (3) (a) of the statutes is amended to read:

22 45.03 (3) (a) The council on veterans programs created under s. 15.497 shall
23 advise the ~~board and the~~ department on solutions and policy alternatives relating
24 to the problems of veterans.

25 **SECTION 45.** 45.03 (5) (a) 1. of the statutes is amended to read:

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1 45.03 (5) (a) 1. “Existing building” in relation to any conveyance, lease, or
2 sublease made under par. (c) 1. means all detention, treatment, administrative,
3 recreational, infirmary, hospital, vocational, and academic buildings; all
4 dormitories and cottages; all storage facilities, heating plants, and sewage disposal
5 plants, and other buildings, structures, facilities, and permanent improvements that
6 in the judgment of the ~~board~~ department are needed or useful for the purposes of the
7 department, and all equipment for them and all improvements and additions to them
8 that were erected, constructed, or installed prior to the making of the conveyance,
9 lease, or sublease.

10 **SECTION 46.** 45.03 (5) (a) 2. of the statutes is amended to read:

11 45.03 (5) (a) 2. “New building” in relation to any conveyance, lease, or sublease
12 made under par. (c) 1. means all detention, treatment, administrative, recreational,
13 infirmary, hospital, vocational, and academic buildings; all dormitories and
14 cottages; all storage facilities, heating plants, and sewage disposal plants, and other
15 buildings, structures, facilities, and permanent improvements as in the judgment of
16 the ~~board~~ department are needed or useful for the purposes of the department, and
17 all equipment for them and all improvements and additions to them that are erected,
18 constructed, or installed after the making of the conveyance, lease, or sublease.

19 **SECTION 47.** 45.03 (5) (c) 1. a. of the statutes is amended to read:

20 45.03 (5) (c) 1. a. Without limitation by reason of any other provisions of the
21 statutes except ss. 13.48 (14) (am) and 16.848 (1), unless otherwise required by law,
22 the power to sell and to convey title in fee simple to a nonprofit corporation any land
23 and any existing buildings owned by the state that are under the jurisdiction of the
24 department for the consideration and upon the terms and conditions as in the
25 judgment of the ~~board~~ department are in the public interest.

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1 **SECTION 48.** 45.03 (5) (c) 1. b. of the statutes is amended to read:

2 45.03 (5) (c) 1. b. Unless otherwise required by law, the power to lease to a
3 nonprofit corporation for a term or terms not exceeding 50 years each any land and
4 any existing buildings owned by the state that are under the jurisdiction of the
5 department upon the terms and conditions as in the judgment of the ~~board~~
6 department are in the public interest.

7 **SECTION 49.** 45.03 (5) (c) 1. c. of the statutes is amended to read:

8 45.03 (5) (c) 1. c. The power to lease or sublease from the nonprofit corporation,
9 and to make available for public use, any land, or any land and existing buildings
10 conveyed or leased to such nonprofit corporation under subd. 1. a. and b., and any
11 new buildings erected upon such land or upon any other land owned by the nonprofit
12 corporation, upon the terms, conditions, and rentals, subject to available
13 appropriations, as in the judgment of the ~~board~~ department are in the public interest.

14 **SECTION 50.** 45.03 (5) (c) 3. of the statutes is amended to read:

15 45.03 (5) (c) 3. Nothing in this subsection empowers the ~~board~~ or the
16 department to incur any state debt.

17 **SECTION 51.** 45.03 (5) (c) 4. of the statutes is amended to read:

18 45.03 (5) (c) 4. ~~All powers and duties conferred upon the board or the~~
19 ~~department under this subsection shall be exercised and performed by resolution of~~
20 ~~the board.~~ All conveyances, leases, and subleases made under this subsection, ~~when~~
21 ~~authorized by resolution of the board,~~ shall be made, executed, and delivered in the
22 name of the department and shall be signed by the secretary and sealed with the seal
23 of the department.

24 **SECTION 52.** 45.03 (12) (a) of the statutes is amended to read:

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1 45.03 (12) (a) The department may receive gifts and bequests in its name for
2 the benefit of Wisconsin veterans and their dependents ~~in accordance with policies~~
3 ~~adopted by the board~~. Moneys received shall be credited to the veterans trust fund.

4 **SECTION 53.** 45.03 (12) (b) of the statutes is amended to read:

5 45.03 (12) (b) The department may receive moneys or other gifts and bequests
6 in its name for the benefit of the Wisconsin Veterans Museum. Moneys received shall
7 be credited to the veterans trust fund and used, as far as practicable, in accordance
8 with the wishes of the donors ~~and in accordance with the board's policies~~.

9 **SECTION 54.** 45.03 (13) (j) of the statutes is repealed.

10 **SECTION 55.** 45.03 (13) (k) of the statutes is repealed.

11 **SECTION 56.** 45.03 (15) of the statutes is amended to read:

12 45.03 (15) DEFERRAL OF PAYMENTS AND INTEREST ON LOANS. When a veteran or
13 a member of the veteran's family makes application for deferment of payment of
14 monthly installments and waiver of interest charges on veterans loans made under
15 this chapter, showing that the ability of the veteran to make payment is materially
16 and adversely affected by reason of military service, the department may, ~~with the~~
17 ~~approval of the board~~, defer payment of monthly installments and waive interest
18 charges on veterans loans made under this chapter for the duration of any period of
19 service in the armed forces of the United States during a national emergency or in
20 time of war or under P.L. 87-117 and 6 months from date of discharge or separation
21 and the time for payment may be extended for the same period. However, when funds
22 estimated to be received in the veterans mortgage loan repayment fund to pay debt
23 service on public debt contracted under s. 20.866 (2) (zn) and (zo) are less than the
24 funds estimated to be required for the payment of the debt service, the board

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1 department may grant deferral of payments and interest on loans provided under s.
2 45.37 only when so required by federal law.

3 **SECTION 57.** 45.21 (1) of the statutes is amended to read:

4 45.21 (1) AMOUNT AND APPLICATION. The department may pay a veteran not
5 more than \$3,000 for retraining to enable the veteran to obtain gainful employment.
6 The department shall determine the amount of the payment based on the veteran's
7 financial need. A veteran may apply for aid to the county veterans service officer of
8 the county in which the veteran is living, a county staff member accredited as
9 specified under s. 45.80 (5) (f), or the department. The department may, on behalf
10 of a veteran who is engaged in a structured on-the-job training program and who
11 meets the requirements under sub. (2), make a payment under this subsection to the
12 veteran's employer.

13 **SECTION 58.** 45.37 (1) of the statutes is amended to read:

14 45.37 (1) LOANS AUTHORIZED. An authorized lender ~~or a county veterans service~~
15 ~~officer~~ may, as agent for and with the approval of the department, make loans to
16 eligible persons for qualified purposes in the manner provided under this section.

17 **SECTION 59.** 45.37 (2) of the statutes is amended to read:

18 45.37 (2) LOAN APPLICATIONS. (a) Applications for loans under this section for
19 a purpose specified in s. 45.34 (1) (a), (b), or (d) shall be made to an authorized lender
20 and applications for loans under this section for a purpose specified under s. 45.34
21 (1) (c) may be made to the department ~~or to a county veterans service officer~~ on forms
22 approved by the department and signed by the applicant. If the applicant is married
23 and not legally separated under s. 767.001 (1) (d) or in the process of obtaining a
24 divorce, the applicant's spouse also shall sign the application.

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1 (b) The applicant may apply directly to the department ~~or through a county~~
2 ~~veterans service officer~~ for certification of eligibility.

3 **SECTION 60.** 45.37 (4) (a) of the statutes is amended to read:

4 45.37 (4) (a) The ~~board~~ department shall determine the interest rate on loans
5 made under this section. Except as provided in sub. (11), the interest rate
6 determined may not be increased during the term of the loan. Except as provided
7 in sub. (11), the interest rate shall be as low as possible but shall be sufficient to fully
8 pay all expenses and to provide reserves that are reasonably expected to be required
9 in the judgment of the board in accordance with par. (b) and sub. (7) (a) 3.

10 **SECTION 61.** 45.37 (4) (b) 1. of the statutes is amended to read:

11 45.37 (4) (b) 1. The ~~board~~ department shall select and implement the methods
12 of insuring against losses arising from delinquency and default in the repayment of
13 loans funded under sub. (6) (a) and shall select and implement the methods of
14 managing and selling any property securing loans funded under sub. (6) (a).

15 **SECTION 62.** 45.37 (4) (b) 2. of the statutes is amended to read:

16 45.37 (4) (b) 2. The ~~board~~ department shall charge or cause to be charged to
17 borrowers all costs necessary to insure against losses under subd. 1.

18 **SECTION 63.** 45.37 (6) (a) 2. of the statutes is amended to read:

19 45.37 (6) (a) 2. The ~~chairperson of the board~~ secretary shall certify that the
20 ~~chairperson~~ secretary does not expect proceeds of state debt issued under this
21 paragraph to be used in a manner that would cause the debt to be arbitrage bonds
22 as defined in the Internal Revenue Code, if that debt is a bond that is exempt from
23 federal taxation.

24 **SECTION 64.** 45.37 (6) (c) 2. of the statutes is amended to read:

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1 45.37 (6) (c) 2. The ~~chairperson of the board~~ secretary shall certify that the
2 ~~board and the department do~~ does not expect and shall not use proceeds of revenue
3 obligations issued under this paragraph in a manner that would cause the revenue
4 obligations to be arbitrage bonds as defined in the Internal Revenue Code, where
5 that debt is a bond that is exempt from federal taxation.

6 **SECTION 65.** 45.37 (7) (a) (intro.) of the statutes is amended to read:

7 45.37 (7) (a) (intro.) There is created the veterans mortgage loan repayment
8 fund. All moneys received by the department for the repayment of loans funded
9 under sub. (6) (a) except for servicing fees required to be paid to authorized lenders,
10 net proceeds from the sale of mortgaged properties, any repayment to the
11 department of moneys paid to authorized lenders, gifts, grants, other
12 appropriations, and interest earnings accruing, any repayment of moneys borrowed
13 under s. 45.42 (8) (a), all moneys received under sub. (5) (a) 6., and any moneys
14 deposited or transferred under s. 18.04 (6) (b) or (d) shall be promptly deposited into
15 the veterans mortgage loan repayment fund. The ~~board~~ department shall establish
16 by resolution a system of accounts providing for the maintenance and disbursement
17 of moneys of the veterans mortgage loan repayment fund to fund loans under sub.
18 (6) (a) or to fund, refund, or acquire public debt as provided in s. 18.04 (5). The system
19 of accounts shall record and provide moneys for all of the following purposes:

20 **SECTION 66.** 45.37 (7) (b) of the statutes is amended to read:

21 45.37 (7) (b) The ~~board~~ department may amend the system of accounts
22 established under par. (a) ~~only by resolution of the board that is approved by~~ with the
23 approval of the building commission.

24 **SECTION 67.** 45.37 (10) (a) of the statutes is amended to read:

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1 45.37 (10) (a) All moneys received from any source for repayment of loans,
2 mortgages, or mortgage loan notes funded with proceeds of revenue obligations
3 issued under sub. (6) (c) shall be deposited into one or more separate nonlapsible
4 trust funds in the state treasury or with a trustee appointed for that purpose by the
5 authorizing resolution for the revenue obligations. The ~~board~~ department may
6 pledge revenues received by the funds to secure revenue obligations issued under
7 sub. (6) (c) and shall have all other powers necessary and convenient to distribute the
8 proceeds of the revenue obligations and loan repayments in accordance with subch.
9 II of ch. 18. Unrestricted balances in the funds may be used to fund additional loans
10 issued under sub. (6) (c) and pay the balances owing on loans after the assumptions
11 of the loans or the closings of the sales of residences under sub. (11) (c).

12 **SECTION 68.** 45.43 (title) and (1) of the statutes are amended to read:

13 **45.43 (title) Veterans assistance program housing and recovery**
14 **programs; aid to indigent veterans.** (1) The department shall administer ~~a~~
15 ~~program~~ programs to provide assistance to persons who served in the U.S. armed
16 forces or in forces incorporated as part of the U.S. armed forces and who were
17 discharged under conditions other than dishonorable. The department shall provide
18 assistance under this section to persons whose need for services is based upon
19 homelessness, incarceration, or other circumstances designated by the department
20 by rule. The eligibility requirements under s. 45.02 (2) do not apply to a person
21 applying for assistance under this section. The department shall designate the
22 assistance available under this section, which may include assistance in receiving
23 medical care, dental care, education, employment, single room occupancy housing,
24 ~~and transitional housing, and, notwithstanding s. 45.51 (14), housing in an assisted~~

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1 living facility. The department may provide payments to facilitate the provision of
2 services under this section.

3 **SECTION 69.** 45.47 (1) of the statutes is amended to read:

4 45.47 (1) DEFINITION. In this section, “grant recipient” means a county,
5 American Indian tribe or band, nonprofit organization, county veterans service
6 consortium, or other person that is not an individual and that receives a grant from
7 the department under this chapter.

8 **SECTION 70.** 45.50 (2b) of the statutes is renumbered 45.50 (2b) (a).

9 **SECTION 71.** 45.50 (2b) (b) of the statutes is created to read:

10 45.50 (2b) (b) The department shall annually make a payment of \$42,000 from
11 the appropriation under s. 20.485 (1) (fm) to the town of Dover for the cost of
12 providing municipal services to the Wisconsin Veterans Home at Union Grove.

13 **SECTION 72.** 45.50 (4) (a) of the statutes is amended to read:

14 45.50 (4) (a) The department may use moneys appropriated under s. 20.485 (1)
15 (h) to purchase, erect, construct, or remodel buildings, to provide additions and
16 improvements, to provide equipment, materials, supplies, and services necessary for
17 the purposes of veterans homes, and for expenses that are necessary and incidental
18 to acquisition of property under s. ~~45.51 (10)~~ 45.50 (14) and (11) (15).

19 **SECTION 73.** 45.51 (3) (b) of the statutes is amended to read:

20 45.51 (3) (b) Spouses, surviving spouses, and parents derive their eligibility
21 from the eligibility of the person under sub. (2) (a) 1. or 2. Surviving spouses and
22 parents of eligible persons under sub. (2) (a) 1. or 2. shall not be eligible for admission
23 to the Wisconsin Veterans Home at Union Grove, the Wisconsin Veterans Home at
24 King, or the Wisconsin Veterans Home at Chippewa Falls unless a home’s overall
25 occupancy level is below an optimal level as determined by the ~~board~~ department.

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1 **SECTION 74.** 45.51 (3) (c) 1. d. of the statutes is amended to read:

2 45.51 (3) (c) 1. d. Parents of eligible persons under sub. (2) (a) 1. ~~or 2.~~ to 3. have
3 4th priority for admission.

4 **SECTION 75.** 45.51 (3) (c) 1m. c. of the statutes is amended to read:

5 45.51 (3) (c) 1m. c. A person who is ~~not a resident of the state on the date of~~
6 ~~application for membership in a veterans home~~ eligible under sub. (1m) has 3rd
7 priority for admission.

8 **SECTION 76.** 45.51 (3) (c) 2. of the statutes is amended to read:

9 45.51 (3) (c) 2. The department may deviate from this sequence ~~upon order of~~
10 ~~the board~~ to prevent the separation of a husband and wife.

11 **SECTION 77.** 45.51 (6m) of the statutes is renumbered 45.51 (1m) and amended
12 to read:

13 45.51 (1m) RESIDENCY. ~~In~~ Notwithstanding s. 45.02 (2) and subject to sub. (3),
14 in order to be eligible for benefits under this subchapter, a person ~~specified under~~
15 ~~sub. (2) (a) 1., 2., or 3.~~ does not have to be a resident of this state ~~on the date of~~
16 ~~application for membership.~~

17 **SECTION 78.** 45.51 (7) of the statutes is renumbered 45.50 (12), and 45.50 (12)
18 (a), as renumbered, is amended to read:

19 45.50 (12) (a) The ~~board~~ department shall establish a pay plan for
20 compensation of members for services rendered to a veterans home under its work
21 therapy program.

22 **SECTION 79.** 45.51 (8) of the statutes is renumbered 45.50 (13).

23 **SECTION 80.** 45.51 (10) of the statutes is renumbered 45.50 (14), and 45.50 (14)
24 (a) and (b), as renumbered, are amended to read:

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1 45.50 (14) (a) Except as otherwise provided in this subsection, the application
2 and admission of any applicant admitted under ~~this section~~ s. 45.51 shall constitute
3 a valid and binding contract between a member and the department. If a member
4 dies leaving a relative that is entitled to an interest in the property of the member
5 under the rules of intestate succession or a will the existence of which is made known
6 to the commandant of the veterans home within 60 days of the member's death, the
7 member's property shall constitute a part of the member's estate, except the
8 commandant may distribute personal effects of nominal monetary value of a
9 deceased member who is not survived by a member spouse to surviving relatives of
10 the member who request the personal effects within a reasonable time after the
11 member's death.

12 (b) The department may manage, sell, lease, or transfer property passing to the
13 state pursuant to ~~this section~~ s. 45.51 or conveyed to it by members, defend and
14 prosecute all actions concerning it, pay all just claims against it, and do all other
15 things necessary for the protection, preservation, and management of the property.
16 All expenditures necessary for the execution of functions under this paragraph or
17 ~~sub. s. 45.51~~ (14) shall be made from the appropriation in s. 20.485 (1) (h).

18 **SECTION 81.** 45.51 (11) of the statutes is renumbered 45.50 (15).

19 **SECTION 82.** 45.51 (12) of the statutes is renumbered 45.50 (16).

20 **SECTION 83.** 45.57 (1) of the statutes is amended to read:

21 45.57 (1) The department may transfer all or part of the unencumbered balance
22 of any of the appropriations under s. 20.485 (1) (g), (~~gd~~), (gk), or (i) to the veterans
23 trust fund or to the veterans mortgage loan repayment fund.

24 **SECTION 84.** 45.62 (2) of the statutes is amended to read:

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1 45.62 (2) The department may prepare blank forms for the transmission to the
2 department of the information required for the record under sub. (1). The
3 department may distribute the forms to county veterans service officers or to county
4 staff members accredited as specified under s. 45.80 (5) (f). A county veterans service
5 officer or county staff member accredited as specified under s. 45.80 (5) (f) within
6 whose county any cemetery or other burial place is located in which deceased
7 veteran's bodies are interred shall submit the facts required for the record under sub.
8 (1) to the department on the forms provided by the department, if so requested by the
9 department.

10 **SECTION 85.** 45.70 (1b) (a) of the statutes is renumbered 45.70 (1b) and
11 amended to read:

12 45.70 (1b) The ~~board~~ department may approve, recommend, and veto any
13 proposed plans, modifications, and changes or policies with respect to established
14 state memorials and any future veterans state memorials, and may recommend the
15 creation and establishment of future veterans state memorials.

16 **SECTION 86.** 45.70 (1b) (b) of the statutes is repealed.

17 **SECTION 87.** 45.70 (1m) of the statutes is repealed.

18 **SECTION 88.** 45.70 (2) (b) of the statutes is amended to read:

19 45.70 (2) (b) No structures, other than memorials approved by the ~~board~~
20 department, and no walks, roads, or subterranean footings may be placed or erected
21 upon Camp Randall Memorial Park, Madison, Wisconsin, as described in par. (c),
22 unless authorized by the legislature; nor shall the park be used for any permanent
23 purpose other than a memorial park and no event may be held within the park unless
24 approved by the department.

25 **SECTION 89.** 45.80 (title) of the statutes is amended to read:

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1 **45.80** (title) **County veterans service officer services to veterans.**

2 **SECTION 90.** 45.80 (1) (a) of the statutes is amended to read:

3 45.80 (1) (a) Except as provided under par. (b), the county board shall may elect
4 a county veterans service officer who shall be a Wisconsin resident who served on
5 active duty under honorable conditions in the U.S. armed forces or in forces
6 incorporated as part of the U.S. armed forces and who meets at least one of the
7 conditions listed in s. 45.01 (12) (a) to (d) and at least one of the conditions listed in
8 s. 45.02 (2).

9 **SECTION 91.** 45.80 (1) (c) of the statutes is amended to read:

10 45.80 (1) (c) In counties with a county executive or county administrator, the
11 county executive or county administrator shall may appoint and supervise a county
12 veterans service officer who shall have the qualifications prescribed under par. (a).
13 The appointment is subject to confirmation by the county board unless the county
14 board, by ordinance, elects to waive confirmation or unless the appointment is made
15 under a civil service system competitive examination procedure established under
16 s. 59.52 (8) or ch. 63.

17 **SECTION 92.** 45.80 (4) of the statutes is amended to read:

18 45.80 (4) MILWAUKEE COUNTY. In counties having a population of 500,000
19 750,000 or more the officer shall may be appointed subject to ss. 63.01 to 63.17.

20 **SECTION 93.** 45.80 (5) (intro.) of the statutes is amended to read:

21 45.80 (5) DUTIES. (intro.) The A county veterans service officer shall do all of
22 the following:

23 **SECTION 94.** 45.80 (5) (e) of the statutes is repealed.

24 **SECTION 95.** 45.80 (5) (f) of the statutes is created to read:

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1 45.80 (5) (f) Identify a county staff member to be accredited by the U.S.
2 department of veterans affairs to assist veterans and their families in the
3 preparation, presentation, and prosecution of a veteran benefit claim in accord with
4 38 USC 5901 to 5904 and 38 CFR 14.629.

5 **SECTION 96.** 45.80 (6) (intro.) of the statutes is repealed.

6 **SECTION 97.** 45.80 (6) (a) of the statutes is renumbered 45.80 (5) (g).

7 **SECTION 98.** 45.80 (6) (b) of the statutes is renumbered 45.80 (5) (h).

8 **SECTION 99.** 45.80 (7) of the statutes is repealed.

9 **SECTION 100.** 45.80 (8) of the statutes is repealed.

10 **SECTION 101.** 45.80 (9) of the statutes is created to read:

11 45.80 (9) PROHIBITED ACTIVITIES. A county veterans service officer may not do
12 any of the following:

13 (a) Verify veterans status for individuals for the purpose of obtaining permits
14 or licenses from the department of natural resources or the department of motor
15 vehicles.

16 (b) Initiate mortgage loans under s. 45.37 or personal loans under s. 45.42.

17 **SECTION 102.** 45.805 of the statutes is created to read:

18 **45.805 County veterans service consortium.** (1) The department may
19 approve a county veterans service consortium to administer veterans benefits and
20 services within the boundaries of the participating counties. The department may
21 not approve more than one county veterans service consortium. The department
22 shall create standards under which a consortium shall operate.

23 (2) The department shall designate one of the proposed participating counties
24 to submit a plan for the proposed county veterans service consortium to the
25 department that sets forth policies and procedures for the consortium. The plan

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1 shall provide for the establishment of a county veterans consortium commission to
2 administer the consortium, and the county veterans consortium commission shall
3 consist of one representative from each county that is a member of the consortium.
4 The plan may not be implemented without the department's approval.

5 (3) If the department approves the plan under sub. (2), the department shall
6 award a grant to the county that submitted the plan to assist the county veterans
7 service consortium in implementing its plan.

8 **SECTION 103.** 45.805 of the statutes, as created by 2015 Wisconsin Act ... (this
9 act), is repealed.

10 **SECTION 104.** 45.81 (2) of the statutes is amended to read:

11 45.81 (2) The commission shall be organized by the election of one of their
12 number as chairperson. The county executive or county board chairperson in a
13 county that does not have a county executive after the expiration of the terms of those
14 first appointed shall annually on or before the 2nd Monday in December appoint one
15 person as a member of the commission for the term of 3 years. ~~Except as provided~~
16 ~~in s. 59.21 (1) (intro.), the county executive or county board chairperson shall require~~
17 ~~each member of the commission and the county veterans service officer to execute to~~
18 ~~the county an individual surety bond, with sufficient sureties to be approved by the~~
19 ~~county executive or county board chairperson, each bond to be in an amount equal~~
20 ~~to the tax levied in the current year for expenditure by the commission. Each bond~~
21 ~~shall be filed with the county clerk.~~

22 **SECTION 105.** 45.81 (3) (a) of the statutes is amended to read:

23 45.81 (3) (a) ~~Except as provided under sub. (4), the~~ The commission may
24 furnish aid to any person described in s. 45.86 if the right of that person to aid is
25 established to the commission's satisfaction.

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1 **SECTION 106.** 45.81 (4) of the statutes is amended to read:

2 45.81 (4) A county veterans service officer appointed under s. 45.80 (1) (b) or
3 (4) shall may have the administrative powers and duties prescribed for the county
4 veterans service commission under sub. (2).

5 **SECTION 107.** 45.81 (6) of the statutes is amended to read:

6 45.81 (6) The county veterans service officer shall may serve as executive
7 secretary of the county veterans service commission and shall may make or direct
8 all necessary investigations to determine eligibility for aid under s. 45.86 when the
9 commission so requests. The county service officer, in making an investigation, may
10 use the facilities for investigating that are made available by the county board.

11 **SECTION 108.** 45.82 (1) of the statutes is amended to read:

12 45.82 (1) Each county may annually apply to the department for a grant for the
13 improvement of service to former military personnel of the county through the
14 county veterans service office. A county may not allocate any portion of a grant for
15 use by another county department nor may the county reduce funding to a county
16 veterans service office based upon receipt of a grant. ~~The county veterans service~~
17 ~~officer of any~~ A county applying for the grant shall enter into an agreement with the
18 department. The agreement shall state the goals and objectives to be attained by the
19 county ~~veterans service office~~ during the remainder of the year covered by the grant
20 application. ~~The department shall prepare the basic form of this agreement in~~
21 ~~consultation with the county veterans service officers association and provide a copy~~
22 ~~and an explanation of that agreement to each county veterans service officer. The~~
23 ~~department shall develop reasonable budget and operating standards to assure~~
24 ~~improved services, but full operating control of the county office shall be left to each~~
25 ~~county.~~

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1 **SECTION 109.** 45.82 (2) of the statutes, as affected by 2015 Wisconsin Act 55,
2 is amended to read:

3 45.82 (2) The department of veterans affairs shall award a grant annually, on
4 a reimbursable basis as specified in this subsection, to a county that meets the
5 standards developed under this section if ~~the county executive, administrator, or~~
6 ~~administrative coordinator certifies to the department that it employs a county~~
7 ~~veterans service officer who, if chosen after April 15, 2015, is chosen from a list of~~
8 ~~candidates who have taken a civil service examination for the position of county~~
9 ~~veterans service officer developed and administered by the bureau of merit~~
10 ~~recruitment and selection in the department of administration, or is appointed under~~
11 ~~a civil service competitive examination procedure under s. 59.52 (8) or ch. 63. The~~
12 department of veterans affairs shall twice yearly reimburse grant recipients for
13 documented expenses under sub. (5), subject to the following annual reimbursement
14 limits: \$8,500 for a county with a population of less than 20,000, \$10,000 for a county
15 with a population of 20,000 to 45,499, \$11,500 for a county with a population of
16 45,500 to 74,999, and \$13,000 for a county with a population of 75,000 or more. The
17 department of veterans affairs shall use the most recent Wisconsin official
18 population estimates prepared by the demographic services center when making
19 grants under this subsection.

20 **SECTION 110.** 45.82 (3) of the statutes is repealed.

21 **SECTION 111.** 45.84 of the statutes is amended to read:

22 **45.84 Burial allowance. (1)** Each county veterans service officer or county
23 staff member accredited as specified under s. 45.80 (5) (f) shall cause to be interred
24 in a decent and respectable manner in any cemetery in this state, other than those
25 used exclusively for the burial of paupers, the body of any veteran, spouse, or

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1 surviving spouse who was living in the county at the time of death and who dies not
2 leaving sufficient means to defray the necessary expenses of a decent burial, or under
3 circumstances that would cause financial distress to the person's family. The cost of
4 this interment shall be the responsibility of the county, but may not be less than \$300,
5 and shall be in addition to the burial allowance payable under laws administered by
6 the U.S. department of veterans affairs.

7 (2) Before assuming the burial expense, the county veterans service officer or
8 county staff member accredited as specified under s. 45.80 (5) (f) shall exercise due
9 diligence in attempting to determine the financial condition required by sub. (1). The
10 county veterans service officer, in making the inquiry, may use the facilities for
11 investigation that are made available by the county board. The county veterans
12 service officer shall report the results of that determination to the appropriate
13 authorities designated by the county.

14 (3) The chairperson of the county board and the clerk of the county on the
15 receipt of the report under sub. (2) shall draw an order on the county treasurer for
16 the amount of expenses so incurred, payable to the person designated in the report
17 as being entitled to that payment. The county veterans service officer of each county
18 or county staff member accredited as specified under s. 45.80 (5) (f) shall, upon the
19 death and burial of a veteran described under sub. (1) who was living in the county
20 at the time of death, make application to the proper authorities for a suitable
21 headstone as provided for by act of congress, and at the expense of the county cause
22 the same to be placed at the head of the deceased's grave.

23 **SECTION 112.** 851.09 of the statutes is amended to read:

24 **851.09 Heir.** "Heir" means any person, including the surviving spouse, who
25 is entitled under the statutes of intestate succession to an interest in property of a

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1 decedent. The state is an heir of the decedent and a person interested under s. ~~45.51~~
2 ~~(10) 45.50 (14)~~ and ~~(11) (15)~~ when the decedent was a member of a Wisconsin veterans
3 home operated by the department of veterans affairs under s. 45.50 at the time of the
4 decedent's death.

5 **SECTION 113. Fiscal changes.**

6 (1) FACILITIES MANAGEMENT. In the schedule under section 20.005 (3) of the
7 statutes for the appropriation to the department of veterans affairs under section
8 20.485 (1) (gk) of the statutes, as affected by the acts of 2015, the dollar amount for
9 fiscal year 2015-16 is increased by \$0 to increase the authorized FTE positions for
10 the department by 1.0 PR position for facilities maintenance at the Veterans Home
11 at Union Grove. In the schedule under section 20.005 (3) of the statutes for the
12 appropriation to the department of veterans affairs under section 20.485 (1) (gk) of
13 the statutes, as affected by the acts of 2015, the dollar amount for fiscal year 2016-17
14 is increased by \$0 to provide funding for the position authorized under this
15 subsection.

16 (2) COUNTY VETERANS SERVICES GRANTS.

17 (a) In the schedule under section 20.005 (3) of the statutes for the appropriation
18 to the department of veterans affairs under section 20.485 (2) (tf) of the statutes, as
19 affected by the acts of 2015, the dollar amount for fiscal year 2016-17 is decreased
20 by \$250,000 to decrease the amount in the appropriation.

21 (b) In the schedule under section 20.005 (3) of the statutes for the appropriation
22 to the department of veterans affairs under section 20.485 (2) (vx) of the statutes, as
23 affected by the acts of 2015, the dollar amount for fiscal year 2016-17 is increased
24 by \$250,000 to provide funding for a county veterans services consortium.

