

# American Legion Department of Illinois

## Legislative Commission

Meeting - September 28, 2024

The Legislative Commission meeting was held at Department Headquarters on September 28, 2024. Chairman Kilkenny called the meeting to order at 10:00 am and led with a salute to the colors and pledge of allegiance. Mark Young offered prayer.

Attending were commission members:

Division 1, Ken Trumbull

Division 2, Ed Stash

Division 3, Kevin Kilkenny, Chairman

Division 4, Division Commander Mark Young sitting in for Commission Member George Elzy

Division 5, Larry Miller, Vice Chairman

There were two guests, Glen Goodrich, 21st District Commander and Jan Sanders, 21st District Sr Vice.

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Attached to these minutes are legislative actions that were introduced in the 103rd General Assembly. Miller spoke briefly about the status of these actions. Several were passed and became public acts, many others remain assigned to committees, with potentially no action in sight before the end of the 103rd General Assembly on January 5, 2025. The 104th General Assembly begins on January 6, 2025. Any legislation from the current assembly that needs to be re-introduced to the 104th, will need to be identified and sponsors acquired. The next time the General Assembly will meet will be for two weeks in November when they come together for

Legislative news and legislation to watch.

The Illinois 103rd General Assembly will end in January 2025 when the 104th General Assembly begins on January 6, 2025.

The House and Senate have been out and haven't had any meetings recently. The next time they will be in session is during the Veto Sessions in November. Veto session is held for six days every fall to allow the General Assembly to take action on bills that the governor has vetoed. Since the governor hasn't vetoed any bills in the 2nd session of the 104rd GA, we need to keep in mind the veto session is not limited to bills that have been vetoed, meaning almost anything could be called over the upcoming veto session.

What follows are several bills in the General Assembly that have an impact on veterans.

To research any bill the Illinois General Assembly Site at <https://ilga.gov>

Type in bill number (must be 4 numbers after the HB or SB)

I encourage those interested to visit or bookmark a link to Illinois General Assembly Dashboard at <https://my.ilga.gov>

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Discussion regarding submission of witness slips. Whenever legislation is discussed in committee meetings, citizens are able to submit witness slips identifying their position on the legislation, whether they are a proponent or opponent on the subject legislation. The ILGA Dashboard may be found at <https://my.ilga.gov>. This dashboard shows the General Assembly session schedules. When committee meetings are scheduled, users may submit a witness slip.

In March of 2024, several veterans organizations visited Capitol Hill in Springfield to meet with legislators. Those present gathered in three groups representing northern Illinois, central Illinois, and southern Illinois to visit senators and representatives from their areas. It was generally considered successful and created a presence in the capital office buildings of the various organizations head covers. The plan is to conduct another Veterans Lobby Day on March 12, 2025.

A question came up about the appropriations for the PACT act.

There was a brief discussion regarding county Veterans Assistance Commissions (VAC), and information provided for information.

At 10:25, the meeting was visited by Department Commander, Joe Lampert; Department Sr Vice, Roy Smith; and Department Adjutant, Josh Thielen.

Commander Lampert encouraged communications at all levels, up and down. We owe it to legion members to let them know what is going on.

Sr Vice Smith spoke on membership. As of the date of the meeting, Illinois was in 14th place in the nation for membership. Need to conduct or keep conducting Buddy Checks, part of the communications process.

Adjutant Thielen addressed the need for members to keep their MyLegion information up to date. He also encouraged commission and committees to keep their portion of the web site up to date. All commission and committee chairmen should be turning in an End of Year report prior to the convention for inclusion in the convention book.

With no further business to conduct, the meeting ended at 10:35am. The next meeting will be held via Zoom, date to be announced.

Submitted by:

Larry Miller  
Vice Chairman  
Acting Secretary

## **Legislation considered during the 103rd General Assembly that became public law or resolutions that were adopted:**

### **HB0612 - REVENUE-TECH Rep Kifowit**

**Public Act 103-0596, 7/1/24**

Replaces everything after the enacting clause. Amends the Property Tax Code. In a Section granting a homestead exemption to veterans with disabilities, provides that property that is used as a qualified residence by a veteran who was a member of the United States Armed Forces during World War II is exempt from taxation regardless of the veteran's level of disability. Provides that a veteran who qualifies as a result of his or her service in World War II need not reapply for the exemption. Makes changes concerning service-connected disabilities. Makes changes concerning surviving spouses.

### **HB4661 - PUBLIC UTILITIES-INFRASTRUCTURE**

**Public Act 103-0679, 7/19/24**

Amends the Public Utilities Act. Provides that no electric utility shall establish or maintain any unreasonable difference as to rates or other charges, services, contractual terms, or facilities for access to or the use of its utility infrastructure by another person or for any other purpose. Amends the Electric Service Customer Choice and Rate Relief Law of 1997. Prohibits an electric utility in a county with a population of 3,000,000 or more from authorizing any other person or granting any other person the right, by agreement, lease, license, or otherwise, to access, control, use, or operate any electric utility's infrastructure, facilities, or assets of any kind or to deliver or provide to the electric utility's retail customers or any other person's customers, broadband services, Voice over Internet Protocol (VoIP) services, telecommunications services, or cable or video programming services. Specifies, however, that an electric utility in a county with a population of 3,000,000 or more may authorize or grant another person the right to access or use the electric utility's infrastructure, facilities, or assets, including, but not limited to, middle mile infrastructure, to facilitate the delivery of broadband services to Illinois residential and commercial customers on the condition that the access to and use of that electric utility's infrastructure, facilities, and assets (A) be granted on a non-discriminatory, non-exclusive, and competitively neutral basis; and (B) comply with all other State and federal laws, rules, and regulations, including, but not limited to, all applicable safety codes and requirements. Provides that, if there is any dispute regarding the terms, rates, or conditions of access to or use of the electric utility's infrastructure, facilities, and assets to facilitate the delivery of broadband services to Illinois residential and commercial customers, then the Commission shall hear and decide the dispute upon petition of any party. Provides that nothing in the amendatory Act shall be construed to alter or diminish the rights or obligations of any person nor shall it be deemed to conflict with the federal Pole Attachment Act. Specifies that these prohibitions become inoperative after December 31, 2027. Defines terms.

### **HB4757 - VETS-BENEFITS NOTICE POSTER**

**Public Act 103-0828, 8/9/24**

Amends the Department of Veterans' Affairs Act. Provides that the Department of Veterans Affairs shall create, and the Department of Labor shall make available, at no cost, a veterans and service members' benefits, services, and protections poster. Requires the poster to include, but not be limited to,

information regarding free veterans' benefits and services provided by the Illinois Department of Veterans Affairs and other veterans service organizations, tax benefits, the Illinois veteran driver's license and non-driver veteran identification card, and Illinois protections for survivors of sexual violence in the military. Requires the poster to also include contact information for the United States Department of Veterans Affairs, the Illinois Department of Veterans Affairs; and the Veterans Crisis Line. Effective January 1, 2025.

#### **HB5640 - VETERANS-SPACE FORCE**

**Became Public Act 103-0746, 8/2/24**

Amends the Statute on Statutes. Provides that whenever there is a reference in any Act to "armed forces", "armed forces of the United States", "U.S. Armed Forces", "United States Armed Forces", or "uniformed services", these terms shall be construed to include the United States Space Force. Amends the Flag Display Act, the Secretary of State Merit Employment Code, the Veterans Preference Act, the Veterans Burial Places Act, and various other Acts. In all occurrences of the definition for "armed forces of the United States" and "member of the Armed Services or Reserve Forces of the United States" expands the list of armed forces branches to include the Space Force. Makes conforming changes in the definition of "veteran" under the Department of Commerce and Economic Opportunity Law, in the definition of "military service" under the Illinois Pension Code, and in a provision under the Veterans Burial Places Act that lists the various military branches that make up the Reserve Officers Training Corps. Makes other conforming changes.

#### **HB5655 -VETERANS' SERVICES TASK FORCE**

**Became Public Act 103-0871, 8/9/24**

Amends the Public Higher Education Act. Provides that the governing board of each public institution of higher education shall adopt a policy to allow a student who is a member of the National Guard of any state, the District of Columbia, a commonwealth, or a territory of the United States or any reserve component of the Armed Forces of the United States to submit classwork and complete any other class assignments missed due to the student participating in a drill required as a member of the National Guard or the reserve component.

#### **HR0506 - SUPPORT FAMILY CAREGIVERS Veteran Caregiver Benefits**

**Resolution Adopted 5/3/24**

Urges the passage of important policies to better support family caregivers, particularly by enacting policies that: (1) provide increased funding for Illinois' Community Care Program, Home Delivered Meals, the Illinois Family Caregiver Act, Illinois Area Agencies on Aging, Illinois Case Coordination Units, Long-Term and Home Care Ombudsman, and other older adult programs and resources for Illinois caregivers at the Illinois Department on Aging and other State agencies, and examine policy changes to improve the navigability of these resources, (2) improve the inclusion of family caregivers in their loved one's care and hospital discharge and planning, and provide them with the education, training, and support they need, including as their loved one moves from one place of care to another, in Hospital at Home programs, in Medicare more broadly, and in measures of provider engagement with and in support of family caregivers and family caregivers' experience of care and support, and support veterans and their caregivers, (3) increase access to options and eligibility for care at home, including but not limited to providing permanent financial protections for the spouses of individuals receiving Medicaid Home and Community Based Services, incentivizing Home and Community Based Services expansion, expanding caregiver and senior support options and resources in the State's

Community Care Program, and more, (4) attract and retain direct care workers through increased pay and benefits, improved training, career pathways, and other job improvement initiatives, and (5) provide financial relief for family caregivers, such as through a family caregiver income tax credit, to help offset a portion of caregiving expenses paid by caregivers.

#### **SB2626 - CRIM ID ACT-EXPUNGEMENT FILING**

- Expungement from Veterans Treatment Court

**Became Public Act 103-0755, 8/2/24**

Amends the Criminal Identification Act. Provides that, in anticipation of the successful completion of a diversion program, a petitioner may file a petition for expungement at least 61 days before the anticipated dismissal of the case. Provides that, if a petition is filed, and upon the successful completion of the diversion program and dismissal of the case, the court shall review the petition and shall grant expungement if the petitioner meets all requirements. Amends the Drug Court Treatment Act, the Veterans and Servicemembers Court Treatment Act, and the Mental Health Court Treatment Act to make conforming changes.

#### **SB3479 - Claim Shark Amendment**

**Became Public Act 103-0783, 8/6/24**

Amends provisions of the Consumer Fraud and Deceptive Business Practices Act concerning deceptive practices targeting veterans and military members. Changes the definition of "veteran or military benefits services" to any services offered or provided to a veteran, military member, or family member who is entitled to receive benefits under federal, State, or local law, policy, or practice as a result of, at least in part, qualifying military service. Such services include assistance, consulting or coaching in the preparation, presentation, or prosecution of claims or other attempts to obtain benefits, increase benefits, or appeal a decision related to obtaining or increasing benefits. Adds a veterans services disclosure to be made by any person providing veteran or military benefits services. Makes it an unlawful practice for any person providing veteran or military benefits services to fail at the outset of the business relationship to clearly provide, both orally and in writing, veterans services disclosures when veteran or military benefits services are provided in exchange for any financial compensation, benefit or thing of value. Makes other changes.

## **Legislation of the 103rd General Assembly that remains to be considered:**

#### **HB2239 - INTERNET GAMING ACT**

*Filed with the Clerk 2/8/23*

*4/5/24 Re-referred to the Rules Committee*

Creates the Internet Gaming Act. Authorizes an Internet gaming operator to offer Internet gaming in accordance with the provisions of the Act. Provides that Internet gaming shall only be offered by an Internet gaming license or an Internet management services provider that has contracted with an Internet gaming licensee. Provides that an internet

gaming licensee shall offer no more than 3 individually branded Internet gaming skins. Provides that an Internet management services provider may conduct Internet gaming on its own Internet gaming platform pursuant to the agreement between the provider and an Internet gaming licensee and in accordance with the rules of the Board and the provisions of the Act. Includes provisions for: requirements of an Internet gaming platform; Internet wagering accounts; license requirements; age verification, location, and responsible gaming; diversity goals in procurement and spending by Internet gaming licensees; acceptance of out-of-state wagers; and limitations on home rule units. Provides that a 15% privilege tax is imposed on Internet gaming to be deposited into the State Gaming Fund. Authorizes the adoption of emergency rules to implement the Act and makes conforming changes in the Illinois Administrative Procedure Act. Effective immediately. **OPPOSE**

**HB4128 - VETERANS DAY-PAID LEAVE**

*Filed with the Clerk 8/23/23*

*4/5/24 Re-referred to the Rules Committee*

Creates the Veterans Day Paid Leave Act. On and after January 1, 2025, requires each employer to provide each employee who is a veteran with a paid day off on Veterans Day if the employee would otherwise be required to work on that day. Provides that the employee must provide notice to the employer that he or she intends to take time off on Veterans Day and must provide the employer with documentation verifying that he or she is a veteran. Amends the Illinois Income Tax Act. Creates an income tax credit in an amount equal to 100% of the wages paid by the taxpayer to a veteran as a result of the paid day off required under the Veterans Day Paid Leave Act.

**HB4187 - REPEAL ILLINOIS TRUST ACT Changes to Illinois ID Card**

*Filed with the Clerk 10/23/24*

*10/25/24 Referred to Rules Committee*

Repeals the Illinois TRUST Act. Makes corresponding changes in the Illinois Identification Card Act and the Illinois Vehicle Code.

**HB4574 - CD CORR-AGGRAVATING FACTORS Crimes Against Veteran, aggravated circumstance**

*Filed with the Clerk 1/24/24*

*1/31/24 Referred to Rules Committee*

Amends the Unified Code of Corrections. Provides that if the defendant committed the offense in or on the grounds of a hospital, ambulatory surgical treatment center, physician's office, or other medical facility that treats patients and the offense was a crime of violence committed against a licensed health care professional or an employee of a hospital, ambulatory surgical treatment center, physician's office, or other medical facility that treats patients, this factor shall be accorded weight in favor of imposing a term of imprisonment or may be considered by the court as a reason to impose a more severe sentence. The act already provides for acts against the elderly, members of the Armed Forces, veterans performing duties as a representative of a veterans' organization.

## **HB4599 - HOME MODIFICATION PROGRAM ACT**

*Filed with the Clerk 1/29/24*

*4/5/24 Re-referred to Rules Committee*

Creates the Home Modification Program Act. Provides that the purpose of the Act is to establish a home modification funding system that is streamlined, effective, and administered by experts within the disability community. Provides that, subject to appropriation, the Department of Human Services shall establish a Home Modification Program to provide financial assistance to persons with disabilities for home modification projects. Requires the Department to designate a statewide association that represents centers for independent living to serve as the lead agency to administer the program. Requires the Department to provide funding for the Program. Requires the lead agency to distribute any moneys it receives from the Department to the State's 22 centers for independent living, covering all 102 counties. Provides that the lead agency shall ensure that each center for independent living has access to at least \$105,000 to use for home modification projects, with the excess funds subject to reallocation during the 4th fiscal quarter of each year. Contains provisions concerning eligibility requirements for applicants under the Program; the lead agency's establishment of a Home Modification Subcommittee to provide additional oversight of the home modification projects; and an administrative fee to the lead agency.

## **HB4677 - CAREGIVER ASSISTANCE RESOURCES**

*Filed with the Clerk 2/1/24*

*4/19/24 Passed House*

*4/24/24 Arrive in Senate*

*5/17/24 Re-referred to Assignments*

Creates the Illinois Caregiver Assistance and Resource Portal Act. Requires the Department on Aging, in consultation with the Department of Healthcare and Family Services, the Department of Public Health, and the Department of Veterans' Affairs, to be responsible for the creation and maintenance of the Illinois Caregiver Assistance and Resource Portal (Portal). Provides that the Portal shall serve as a centralized and trusted online platform offering a wide range of resources related to caregiving, including, but not limited to: (1) information on State and federal programs, benefits, and resources on caregiving, long-term care, and at-home care for Illinois residents who are 50 years of age or older; (2) educational materials, articles, and videos on caregiving best practices; and (3) accommodations for users with different language preferences, ensuring the information is accessible to diverse audiences. Sets forth additional resources and information that the Portal may feature, such as information on caregiving resources, home and community-based services that support family caregivers, nursing home care, services and programs offered by Area Agencies on Aging, relevant health care and financial assistance programs, and local support group opportunities for caregivers. Requires the Portal to be designed to be user-friendly and accessible to individuals of all ages and abilities and to include features such as search functionality, language accessibility, and compatibility with assistive technologies to ensure that a diverse range of caregivers can use it. Contains provisions concerning required outreach and promotional campaign efforts to raise awareness of the Portal, reporting requirements, and State and federal funding for the Portal. Requires the Portal to be implemented one year after the effective date of the Act.

**House Committee Amendment No. 1** *adopted 4/18/24*

Provides that the Illinois Caregiver Assistance and Resource Portal shall be implemented 3 years (rather than one year) after the effective date of the Act.

**House Committee Amendment No. 2** *adopted 4/18/24*

Makes the creation and establishment of the Illinois Caregiver Assistance and Resource Portal subject to appropriation.

**HB4868 - VETS-IMMIGRATION SERVICES**

*Filed with Clerk 2/6/24*

*2/7/24 Referred to Rules Committee*

Amends the Department of Veterans' Affairs Act. Establishes a military immigrant family legacy program within the Department of Veterans' Affairs. Requires the program to be jointly developed and implemented by the Director of Veterans' Affairs (Director) and the Adjutant General of the Department of Military Affairs, in consultation with the Department of Human Services' Office of Welcoming Centers for Refugee and Immigrant Services. Provides that the primary purpose of the program shall be to assist uniformed service members, veterans, reserve component members, and their family members to secure legal immigration status in the United States, including, but not limited to, citizenship. Provides that 2 military immigrant family legacy program coordinators shall be appointed to administer the program. Sets forth the coordinators' duties, including, but not limited to: (1) assisting intended recipients, who may qualify for adjustment of status, special immigration status through the federal Parole in Place program, or any other sort of immigration relief, including relief that can lead to citizenship; communicating with the Director and the Adjutant General and the Department of Human Services' Office of Welcoming Centers for Refugee and Immigrant Services regarding existing policies and regulations pertaining to the needs of intended recipients and to make recommendations regarding the improvement of benefits and services to such intended recipients; and (3) developing and maintaining a clearinghouse for information and resources relating to the program as well as other federal, State, local, and nonprofit programs that may offer assistance to intended recipients in immigration matters. Requires program coordinators to submit a report to the Director and the Adjutant General on January 1, 2026 and each January 1 thereafter that provides a description and evaluation of the coordinators' activities for the preceding calendar year as well as any recommendations for future programmatic changes. Requires the Director and the Adjutant General to jointly submit the report on an annual basis to the Governor and the General Assembly. Makes conforming changes to the Department of Human Services Act and the Military Code of Illinois.

**HB5074 - MEDICAL RECORDS-COPY EXPENSE**

*Filed with Clerk 2/8/24*

*2/8/24 Referred to Rules Committee*

Amends the Code of Civil Procedure. Prohibits a health care provider from charging a handling fee for providing medical records to a patient or patient's representative if they are electronic records retrieved from a scanning, digital imaging, electronic information, or other digital format in an electronic document. Repeals the annual adjustment for the handling fee for inflation.

**HB5653 - VETERANS' SERVICES TASK FORCE**

*Filed with the Clerk 2/9/24*

***Passed House on 4/17/24***

*Arrived in Senate 4/18/24*

*5/17/24 Re-referred to Assignments*

Amends the Department of Veterans' Affairs Act. Reenacts a provision concerning the Veterans'



Service-Related Ailments Task Force repealed by Public Act 102-417. Changes the name of the Veterans' Service-Related Ailments Task Force to the Veterans' Services Task Force. Changes the frequency of Task Force meetings to at least twice a year and at any other times the Task Force deems necessary. Requires the Task Force to submit its report to the Governor and the General Assembly by December 31, 2025. Repeals the provisions creating the Task Force on December 31, 2026.

#### **HB4680 VETERAN SERVICE ORGANIZATIONS**

Introduced 2/1/24, in Rules Committee 2/6/24

Amends the Veteran Service Organizations State Charter Act. Changes the name of the Act to the Veteran Service Organizations Equal Act. Provides that a veteran service organization shall be considered to have veteran service organization status (rather than shall be considered state chartered). Requires a veteran service organization to have annual expenditures that demonstrate that 20% (rather than a majority) of the organization's expenses reflect support for veterans in order to qualify for veteran service organization status. **OPPOSE**

#### **SB2315 - INC TX-STANDARD EXEMPTION**

Override of Gov veto on Homestead Exemption Provision now in the Senate Assignment Committee

*Filed with the Secretary 2/10/23*

**3/29/23 Passed Senate**      **3/30/23 Arrived in House**

*11/8/23 House Floor Amendment 1 (HFA 31) Filed*

**11/9/23 Passed House**

*11/9/23 Arrived Senate on calendar for concurrence of HFA #1*

*12/10/23 Referred to Assignments*

HFA #1 to SB 2315—Replaces everything after the enacting clause. Amends the Property Tax Code. In a Section granting a homestead exemption to veterans with disabilities, provides that property that is used as a qualified residence by a veteran who was a member of the United States Armed Forces during World War II is exempt from taxation regardless of the veteran's level of disability. Provides that a veteran who qualifies as a result of his or her service in World War II need not reapply for the exemption. Makes changes concerning service-connected disabilities. Makes changes concerning surviving spouses.

#### **SB2665 - OMA-SERVICE MEMBER ATTENDANCE**

*Filed with Secretary 1/10/24*

**4/9/24 Passed Senate**, arrived House

*4/10/24 Referred to Rules Committee*

*5/31/24 Re-referred to Rules Committee*

Amends the Open Meetings Act. Provides that, if a quorum of the members of the public body is physically present, a majority of the public body may allow a member of that body to attend the meeting by other means if the member is prevented from physically attending because of performance of active military duty as a service member. Defines "active military duty" and "service member".

#### **SB2666 - MILITARY FUNERAL HONORS LEAVE**

*Filed with Secretary 1/10/24*

*6/26/24 Referred to Assignments*

Amends the Family Military Leave Act. Changes the name of the Act to the "Military Leave Act". Provides that an employee may use up to 8 hours per calendar month to participate in a funeral honors detail, up to a total of 40 hours per calendar year, or more if authorized by the employer or if provided for in a collective bargaining agreement. Provides for requirements to take leave for funeral honors details. Provides that an employee that takes leave may do so in lieu of, and without having exhausted, his or her vacation leave, personal leave, compensatory leave, or any other leave that may be granted to the employee, including sick leave and disability leave. Defines terms. Provides that the employer of an employee that takes leave must pay the employee his or her regular rate of pay for the leave taken to participate in a funeral honors detail. Makes conforming changes.

**SB2674 -PROCUREMENT-VETERAN PREF**

*Filed with Secretary 1/10/24*

*6/26/24 Referred to Assignments*

Amends the Illinois Procurement Code. Provides that the certification of service-disabled veteran-owned small businesses and veteran-owned small businesses is an exclusive power and function of the State. Denies home rule powers.

**SB2700 - PROP-TX-DISABLED VETERAN**

*Filed with Secretary 1/10/24*

*5/3/24 Re-referred to Assignments*

Amends the Property Tax Code. In provisions concerning the homestead exemption for veterans with disabilities, provides that the exemption applies to all real property that is the primary residence of a veteran with a disability (currently, property with an equalized assessed value of less than \$250,000 that is the primary residence of a veteran with a disability). Provides that, with respect to veterans with a service connected disability of 70% or more and surviving spouses of veterans whose deaths were service-connected, the first \$250,000 in equalized assessed value of the property is exempt.

**SB2751 - LOCAL-DISABLED VET PERMIT FEE Home Improvement due to Disability**

**Became Public Act 103-0621, 7/1/24**

Amends the Counties Code, Township Code, and Illinois Municipal Code. Provides that a veteran with a disability or the veteran's caregiver shall not be charged any building permit fee for improvements to the residence of the veteran with a disability if the improvements are required to accommodate a disability of the veteran. Provides that the applications, forms, and other paperwork required to obtain a building permit must still be submitted. Limits the concurrent exercise of home rule powers. Effective January 1, 2025.

**SB2950 - VETS-MENTAL HLTH CASE MANAGER**

*Filed with Secretary 1/31/24*

*5/3/24 Re-referred to Assignments*

Amends the Department of Veterans' Affairs Act. Provides that a veterans case manager shall be appointed by the Director of Veterans' Affairs, in consultation with the Secretary of Financial and

Professional Regulation and the Secretary of Human Services, to assist veterans in obtaining the greatest degree of mental health care and mental health care benefits available and to promote policies that would benefit veterans seeking mental health care. Provides that the case manager shall serve at the pleasure of the Director of Veterans' Affairs. Sets forth the duties of the veterans case manager, including, to: (i) act as an intermediary between health care facilities and veterans health care facilities; (ii) provide information to veterans and health care facilities regarding mental health services available to veterans; (iii) apply for, receive, and administer federal aids, grants, and gifts relating to inpatient mental health services for veterans; (iv) encourage physicians, nurses, and other individuals working in mental health care who have military experience to work in Illinois; and (v) collaborate with health care facilities in identifying, upon a person's admission to a health care facility, the person's eligibility for federal veterans benefits, including prescription drug benefits. Amends the Hospital Licensing Act. Requires the Department of Financial and Professional Regulation to adopt rules requiring hospitals, upon identifying a person requiring mental health services as a veteran, to establish and implement certain protocols including (1) contacting the veterans case manager regarding the veteran's admission, (2) identifying whether the veteran is at risk for causing harm to the veteran's self or others, and (3) preventing the hospital from treating a veteran with less or different care than nonveteran patients solely because of a person's veteran status. Amends the Department of Professional Regulation Law. Requires the Department of Financial and Professional Regulation to establish rules requiring licensed health care professionals, as specified, to receive continuing education credits regarding the treatment of veterans as a condition of license renewal.

**SB3074 - VEH CD-REG FEES-VETERANS-WAIVE**

*Filed with Secretary 2/2/24*

*2/2/24 Referred to Assignments*

Amends the Illinois Vehicle Code. Provides that the standard registration fee for passenger motor vehicles of the first division and motor vehicles of the second division weighing not more than 8,000 pounds shall be waived for any veteran who holds proof from the United States Department of Veterans Affairs of a service-connected disability.

**SB3417 - VETERANS COURT-PTSD-PROCEDURES**

*Filed with Secretary 2/8/24*

*2/8/24 Referred to Assignments*

Amends the Veterans and Servicemembers Court Treatment Act. Provides that if a veteran with a service-connected disability is arrested for or charged with a criminal offense and there is prima facie evidence that the veteran was suffering from an episode of post-traumatic stress disorder or a related mental health condition during the commission of the offense, there is a rebuttable presumption that the veteran is eligible to participate in a veterans and servicemembers court program, and after the arrest or charge, the following procedures shall take place: (1) the veteran shall be evaluated and treated as soon as practicable by a qualified medical professional for post-traumatic stress disorder and any other mental health condition or disorder; and (2) the court shall order a screening and clinical needs assessment and risk assessment and a mental health and substance use disorder screening and assessment. Provides that if a veteran with a service-connected disability is charged for the first time with a criminal offense, including a felony, except certain offenses that would make him or her ineligible to participate in a veterans and servicemembers court program, and suffered from post-traumatic stress disorder or a related mental health condition during the commission of the offense,

then, upon successful completion of the terms and conditions of a court program, the court shall dismiss the original charges against the veteran or successfully terminate the veteran's sentence or otherwise discharge the veteran from any further proceedings against the participant in the original prosecution. Establishes certain procedures to be followed when a combat veteran who is a disabled veteran has an episode of post-traumatic syndrome disorder and needs assistance.