

REEB GOVERNMENT RELATIONS, LLC
1415 L STREET, SUITE 870
SACRAMENTO, CA 95814

CAL-MOAA 2022 LEGISLATIVE UPDATE

Prepared by Seth Reeb

Reeb Government Relations

A new legislative year has begun. Currently, RGR is working with legislators and staff to ensure the best standard of living for California Veterans and compiling a list of all the active legislation. The deadline for legislation to be introduced in this calendar year is February 18. January and February are hectic times. Currently, we are communicating with staff at the Capitol about 2-year bills and new legislation. RGR will be finding and sending bills that will affect veterans to your legislative team.

The State has completed its redistricting following the information from the Census report. As populations shift around the State and lines are redrawn, some will see new legislators representing them. It is essential that we notice this and participate in our local and State elections. There will be at least 25 new legislators, out of 120 total, after the November election.

Key Issues 2022

- California driver's license fee removal.
- Military retirement pay tax exemption.
- Veterans cemetery Orange County.

Important dates

Feb. 18 —Last day for bills to be introduced

Apr. 7 —Spring Recess begins upon adjournment

Apr. 18 —Legislature reconvenes from Spring Recess

COVID Restrictions

Reeb Government Relations is still dealing with the effects of COVID at the state capitol. We have continued to meet via zoom, email, and conference calls.

AB 411 (Irwin D) Veterans Housing and Homeless Prevention Bond Act of 2022.

Status: 5/20/2021-In committee: Hearing postponed by committee. (Set for hearing on 01/20/2022)

Location: 1/15/2022-A. APPR.

Summary: Would enact the Veterans Housing and Homeless Prevention Bond Act of

2022 to authorize the issuance of bonds in an amount not to exceed \$600,000,000 to provide additional funding for the VHHPA. The bill would provide for the handling and disposition of the funds in the same manner as the 2014 bond act.

AB 933 (Daly D) Prescription drug cost-sharing.

Status: 1/14/2022-Read second time and amended.

Location: 1/11/2022-A. APPR.

Summary: The Knox-Keene Health Care Service Plan Act of 1975 provides for the licensure and regulation of health care service plans by the Department of Managed Health Care under authority of the Director of the Department of Managed Health Care and makes a willful violation of the act a crime. Existing law provides for the regulation of health insurers by the Department of Insurance under the authority of the Insurance Commissioner. Existing law limits the maximum amount an enrollee or insured may be required to pay at the point of sale for a covered prescription drug to the lesser of the applicable cost-sharing amount or the retail price. This bill would require an enrollee's or insured's defined cost sharing for each prescription drug to be calculated at the point of sale based on a price that is reduced by an amount equal to 90% of all rebates received, or to be received, in connection with the dispensing or administration of the drug.

AB 1400 (Kalra D) Guaranteed Health Care for All.

Status: 1/12/2022-Coauthors revised. From committee: Do pass and re-refer to Com. on APPR. (Ayes 11. Noes 3.) (January 11). Re-referred to Com. on APPR.

Location: 2/19/2021-A. APPR.

Summary: Existing federal law, the federal Patient Protection and Affordable Care Act (PPACA), requires each State to establish an American Health Benefit Exchange to facilitate the purchase of qualified health benefit plans by qualified individuals and qualified small employers. PPACA defines a "qualified health plan" as a plan that, among other requirements, provides an essential health benefits package. Existing state law creates the California Health Benefit Exchange, also known as Covered California, to facilitate the enrollment of qualified individuals and qualified small employers in qualified health plans as required under PPACA. This bill, the California Guaranteed Health Care for All Act, would create the California Guaranteed Health Care for All program, or CalCare, to provide comprehensive universal single-payer health care coverage and a health care cost control system for the benefit of all residents of the State. The bill, among other things, would provide that CalCare cover a wide range of medical benefits and other services and would incorporate the health care benefits and standards of other existing federal and State provisions, including the federal Children's Health Insurance Program, Medi-Cal, ancillary health care or social services covered by regional centers for persons with developmental disabilities, Knox-Keene, and the federal Medicare program. The bill would require the board to seek all necessary waivers, approvals, and agreements to allow various existing federal health care payments to be paid to CalCare, which would then assume responsibility for all benefits and services previously paid for with those funds. This

bill contains other related provisions and other existing laws.

AB 1595 (Quirk-Silva D) Veterans cemetery: County of Orange.

Status: 1/14/2022-Referred to Com. on M. & V.A.

Location: 1/14/2022-A. M. & V.A.

Summary: Current law requires the Department of Veterans Affairs to acquire, study, design, develop, construct, and equip a state-owned and state-operated Southern California Veterans Cemetery in the County of Orange at one of 2 possible sites, as specified. Current law requires the department to, after completing acquisition studies on both sites, consult with the Department of General Services to determine which site to pursue based on the economic feasibility, benefits to veterans and City of Irvine residents, and availability of each location. Current law makes honorably discharged veterans, their spouses, and dependent children eligible for interment in the cemetery, as specified. This bill would delete those site selection requirements and would instead require the department to acquire, study, design, develop, construct, and equip a state-owned and state-operated Southern California Veterans Cemetery in the County of Orange.

AB 1623 (Ramos D) Personal income taxes: exclusion: uniformed services retirement pay: survivor benefit plan payments.

Status: 1/11/2022-From printer. May be heard in committee February 10.

Location: 1/10/2022-A. PRINT

Summary: The Personal Income Tax Law imposes a tax on individual taxpayers measured by the taxpayer's taxable income for the taxable year, but excludes certain items of income from the computation of tax, including an exclusion for combat-related special compensation. This bill, for taxable years beginning on or after January 1, 2023, and before January 1, 2033, would exclude from gross income retirement pay received by a taxpayer from the federal government for service performed in the uniformed services, as defined, during the taxable year. The bill, for taxable years beginning on or after January 1, 2023, and before January 1, 2023, would also exclude from gross income annuity payments received by a qualified taxpayer, as defined, pursuant to a United States Department of Defense Survivor Benefit Plan during the taxable year. The bill would make related findings and declarations. This bill contains other related provisions and other existing laws.

SB 43 (Umberg D) Veterans cemetery: County of Orange.

Status: 1/6/2022-From committee with author's amendments. Read second time and amended. Re-referred to Com. on M. & V.A.

Location: 1/6/2022-A. M. & V.A.

Summary: Current law requires the Department of Veterans Affairs to acquire, study, design, develop, construct, and equip a state-owned and state-operated Southern California Veterans Cemetery in the County of Orange at one of 2 possible sites, as specified. Current law requires the department to, after completing acquisition studies on both sites, consult with the Department of General Services to determine which site

to pursue based on the economic feasibility, benefits to veterans and City of Irvine residents, and availability of each location. Current law makes honorably discharged veterans, their spouses, and dependent children eligible for interment in the cemetery, as specified. This bill would delete those site selection requirements and would instead require the department to acquire, study, design, develop, construct, and equip a state-owned and state-operated Southern California Veterans Cemetery in the City of Irvine, or in the City of Anaheim, as specified.

SB 467 (Wiener D) Trial testimony: expert witnesses: writ of habeas corpus.

Status: 1/13/2022-Set for hearing January 18.

Location: 1/11/2022-S. APPR.

NOTE Update: This was a gut and amended bill. This bill, in 2021, was related to Oil and gas: hydraulic fracturing. Thanks to all that expressed opposition to this initiative, the bill died in 2021 and the author has changed course.

SB 665 (Umberg D) Employment policy: voluntary veterans' preference.

Status: 10/6/2021-Vetoed by the Governor. In Senate. Consideration of Governor's veto pending.

Location: 10/6/2021-S. VETOED

Summary: Would enact the Voluntary Veterans' Preference Employment Policy Act to authorize a private employer to establish and maintain a written veterans' preference employment policy, to be applied uniformly to hiring decisions, to give a voluntary preference for hiring a veteran over another qualified applicant. The bill would require a private employer with a veterans' preference employment policy to annually report to the Department of Fair Employment and Housing the number of veterans hired under the preference policy and any demographic information about those veterans that the employer obtained in response to the department's reporting requirements. Under the bill, failure to submit that report would render any preference granted by the employer ineligible for the protections provided by this bill.

Veto Message: I am returning Senate Bill 665 without my signature. This bill allows private employers to create a temporary veterans' preference for hiring and deems these policies as not violating anti-discrimination laws, until January 1, 2028. Honoring veterans and assisting them in securing employment are vitally important goals of my Administration. However, I am concerned that the veterans' preference policies that would be permitted by this legislation could negatively impact employment opportunities for women and other protected groups underrepresented among veterans, such as people with disabilities. There are ways to make the preference workable and I look forward to working with the author to advance such a policy. Sincerely, Gavin Newsom

SB 837 (Umberg D) Driver's licenses: veteran designation.

Status: 1/7/2022-From printer. May be acted upon on or after February 6.

Location: 1/6/2022-S. RLS.

Summary: Current law allows an in-person applicant for a driver's license or identification card to request the word "VETERAN" be printed on the face of the driver's license or identification card, subject to certain requirements, including, among others, verification of veteran status, as specified, and payment of a \$5 fee, which the department is authorized to increase by regulation, in an amount not to exceed \$15, as specified. Current law prohibits a fee from being charged for that request if made by a person who has been determined to have a current income level that meets the eligibility requirements for specified assistance programs, or a person who can verify their status as a homeless person, in accordance with specified provisions. This bill would repeal the requirement that an applicant pay the above-described fee.

For more information contact:

Jeff Briten
Legislative Chair
breitenj@msn.com

Seth Reeb-Veterans Advocate
Reeb Government Relations
sethr@water-warrior.com