



STATE OF NEVADA
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MEMORANDUM

DATE: May 6, 2015
TO: Chairman Anderson, Assembly Ways and Means Committee
FROM: Caleb Cage, Director of Military and Veterans Policy
RE: *Assembly Bill 482*

- 1) **Background:** Throughout 2014, the Office of the Governor, the Interagency Council on Veterans Affairs (ICVA), and the Nevada Department of Veterans Services (NDVS) administered several policy councils, committees, and convenings in order to develop comprehensive veterans legislative reform ahead of the 78th Legislative Session. A total of 90 recommendations were collected throughout this process, all of which are published together in the “Nevada Veterans Comprehensive Legislative Reform Report,” which was submitted to the Governor and the Legislature for review and consideration. Assembly Bill 482 (AB482) is intended to provide a way to ensure that these recommendation are executed, particularly with respect to aggregate data gathering and synthesis for veterans services in Nevada.

Throughout the policy development process, councils and commissions focused on gathering aggregate data on services provided to veterans, and included recommendations in their reports. I have provided a partial listing of some of the recommended data sources and reports below:

- Page 117 (NDVS): Recommends increasing reporting requirements from agencies serving veterans and requiring NDVS to provide an annual report.
- Pg. 35 (ICVA): Recommends requiring DETR to track and share UI/UCX usage.
- Pg. 37 (ICVA): Recommends requiring state licensing boards to track and share application data.
- Pg. 68 (VSPC): Recommends requiring the Registrar of Vital Records to provide a report on the suicide mortality among veterans.
- Pg. 97 (IVRC): Recommends requiring NDOC to gather and share aggregate data on incarcerated veterans and success rates for intervention programs.
- In 2014, Governor Sandoval signed Executive Order 2014-20 which called for the establishment of a baseline data report for veterans services in.

Several additional reports, including two listed in AB482, are also required, and all are based on the belief that without accurate data on outcomes for veterans in Nevada, then service providers cannot know how effective their programs are, and policy makers cannot effectively know what solutions should be pursued in the future.

Nevada has been highlighted as a national leader by several significant national organizations because of its focus on veteran data gathering. These organizations are interested in following our success through bills like AB62, AB76, AB 89, and this bill, AB482. However, one challenge remains: there is not currently an organization that can synthesize this data in a meaningful and sustainable way.

Initially, AB482 was written to address this challenge by creating the Veterans Policy Leadership Institute (VPLI) as a private institution working in cooperation with scholars and departments at UNR and UNLV. However, due to constraints on the State's ability to create such a private entity in statute, the provisions creating the VPLI have been deleted and the duties reassigned to the ICVA. In my testimony today I am referring to proposed Amendment #6914, which was released on April 30, 2015.

While the creation of the VPLI has been removed from the bill, its establishment and development is currently well underway. VPLI leadership has been in close contact with both UNR and UNLV to formalize a relationship with each following the Session; the baseline data report required by Governor Sandoval's Executive Order 2014-20 is currently being drafted through a partnership with scholars at UNLV; and future opportunities to expand these significant data efforts are already being explored in anticipation of the passage of all four of the Governor's bills that include data requirements for State agencies. This bill would ensure that the ICVA is charged with the responsibility of continuing in these efforts on the state's side going forward.

- 2) **Overview of AB482:** AB482 makes the following changes to assist the Interagency Council on Veterans Affairs in improving outcomes for service members, veterans, and their families in Nevada:
 - a. **Section 9:** The following duties are added to the ICVA:
 - i. Develop and disseminate best practices for improving outcomes for service members, veterans, and their families through state and local level policy recommendations.
 - ii. Foster the development and dissemination of research and policy for improving outcomes for service members, veterans, and their families.
 - iii. Develop and administer a fellowship program to increase research on improving outcomes for service members, veterans, and their families.
 - iv. Develop leadership opportunities for veterans.
 - v. Develop models for outreach and engagement of veterans.
 - vi. Include in its annual report to the Governor and the Legislature the reports listed in Sections 8 and 12, below.
 - b. **Section 8:** The Nevada Department of Veterans Services shall provide a fiscal report in August of each year, covering the agency's budget and expenditures in support of services to Nevada's veterans.
 - c. **Section 12:** The Veterans Services Commission shall provide a report in November of each year to the Interagency Council on Veterans Affairs on activities, opportunities, and recommendations for legislative changes for transmittal to the Governor and the Legislature in February of each year.