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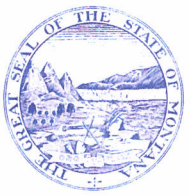
OFFICE OF THE GOVERNOR
STATE OF MONTANA

STEVE BULLOCK
GOVERNOR



BUSINESS & LABOR
EXHIBIT NO. 4
DATE 3/14/2013
BILL NO. HB 259

JOHN WALSH
LT. GOVERNOR

March 14, 2013

Members of the Senate Business, Labor, and Economic Affairs Committee:

In 2004, I led many of Montana's finest men and women in the 163rd Infantry Battalion to Iraq. My Battalion had over 700 Montanans from every corner of the state. It was an 18 month deployment—it was a major sacrifice for the men and women who chose to serve and the families they left behind for a year and a half.

Every day we hear that one of the legislature's goals for this session is to create jobs. In Montana, we have the second highest veteran population of any state in the county per capita with over 110,000 veterans calling our state home, many of them having served during a time of war. It is our duty to work with these men and women to cut any red tape and needless regulation to put them back to work in Montana.

I am writing in support of HB 259 because we believe in creating jobs and assisting all of those who have enlisted on our behalf. As taxpayers, we have already spent time, money, and other resources training our servicemen and women. It would be a waste of their time and our resources to train them again.

If you our servicemen and women can work on behalf of all Americans abroad, they should be able to return to do the same work here in Montana and help build our local economies.

Please join your colleagues in the House of Representatives who passed this bill with a vote of 98-0 and give this bill a do-pass recommendation.

Thank you,

John S. Walsh

JOHN WALSH
Lt. Governor

OFFICE OF THE DEPUTY UNDER SECRETARY OF DEFENSE
(MILITARY COMMUNITY AND FAMILY POLICY)
4000 DEFENSE PENTAGON
WASHINGTON, D.C. 20301-4000

DoD-State Liaison Office

23 January 2013

The Honorable Chuck Hunter
Montana State House
State Capitol Building
Helena, Montana

Dear Representative Hunter:

I am writing to you in regards to your hearing on HB259, concerning acceptance of applicable military training and experience toward professional and occupational licenses. I will not be available to attend the hearing and wish to submit the following as testimony describing the importance of this issue to the military community.

I'm Jacline Harriman Department of Defense Regional State Liaison for the Western region, working for the Deputy Assistant Secretary of Defense for Military Community and Family Policy and I am a combat veteran. My office partners with states on 10 quality of life issues affecting military families. After soliciting feedback from all the military service branches and service organizations, it was determined that state licensing and professional credentialing requirements can limit employment and career options for separating or retiring service members. This is one of our top priority issues to facilitate better transition from military to civilian careers.

In 2011, the Department of Defense began supporting efforts to ask states to give separating service members credit, so that they may not be delayed in finding employment or finishing a degree. We have discovered that separating service members are out of sync with state licensure processes that normally address the needs of applicants who have qualified through private sector schools and training. We are asking states to establish policies that ensure separating service members do not have to repeat requirements completed during their military career to obtain academic credit or an occupational license.

Bureau of Labor Statistics (2011) reported the unemployment rate at 17.5% for post 9/11 veterans in Montana. Given this problem, this issue is now on the Department of Defense top ten quality of life issues for 2013. The Department of Defense has many state of the art schools which train service members in a wide variety of skills and occupations. When state regulators do not recognize and accept military training and experience, it creates an additional burden and hardship upon the veteran.

The Department of Defense works earnestly with the US Department of Labor to link military occupations with training and experience programs that most closely align to the private sector licensure requirements. We still need state regulators to consider the feasibility of the separated or retired servicemembers applicable training.

Montana is home to 102,986 veterans (DVA), and is a desired location for separating and retiring military members when choosing where to live after leaving service. Providing them a hand-up to transition and rebuild a new life after service is good for the veteran and good for the community in which they reside.

Sincerely,

//signed//

Jacline L. Harriman, MA, LPC
Western Region State Liaison