

SESSION OF 2007

**SUPPLEMENTAL NOTE ON
HOUSE SUBSTITUTE FOR SENATE BILL NO. 144**

As Recommended by House Committee on
Taxation

Brief*

House Sub. for SB 144 would amend the Veterans Claims Assistance Program (VCAP) by adding additional eligibility criteria for the Veterans Service Organizations (VSOs) to receive a service grant. VSOs would be required to:

- Cross-accredit employees of Kansas Commission on Veterans Affairs (KCVA) and veterans' claims assistance representatives of other VSOs if that person has successfully completed the National Association of County Veterans Service Officers training and fulfilled continuing education requirements. If that person fails to meet the continuing education requirements, the cross-accrediting VSO may terminate the cross-accreditation of that person;
- Have established state headquarters in Kansas;
- Have staff present in the three United States Department of Veterans Affairs (USDVA) medical centers located in Topeka, Leavenworth and Wichita;
- Have membership residency in at least 50 percent of the Kansas counties;
- Have had an established office presence in the USDVA regional office in Kansas for at least the three most recent state fiscal years;

*Supplemental notes are prepared by the Legislative Research Department and do not express legislative intent. The supplemental note and fiscal note for this bill may be accessed on the Internet at <http://www.kslegislature.org>

- Have assisted in filing a minimum of 300 claims for veterans for which the VSO has power of attorney in the past 12-month period;
- Agree to make no reference to membership eligibility on claims documentation and not solicit membership due to information received on claim forms;
- Agree to cross-accredit service officers participating in the service grant program to include service officers of partnered VSOs and KCVA staff located in the USDVA medical centers in Leavenworth, Topeka, and Wichita;
- Agree that grant funding will not replace but will supplement the monetary support currently provided by VSO to offices in the USDVA medical centers in Leavenworth, Topeka, and Wichita; and
- Agree that VSO's monetary support will be equal to or greater than the monetary support the VSO provided in the previous year for veterans claims assistance in the USDVA medical centers in Leavenworth, Topeka, and Wichita.

The bill would prohibit employees of the KCVA from acting as an agent with power of attorney for any claimant. Additionally, the bill would request the Legislative Post Audit Committee to authorize a performance audit of the VCAP three years after the effective date of the Act to evaluate the program's effectiveness in increasing services to veterans through the veterans service representatives at the three USDVA medical centers in Leavenworth, Topeka, and Wichita.

Background

The original SB 144 dealt with renewal of the 20 mill mandatory school district general fund property tax levy. The House Taxation Committee on March 27 removed the bill's original provisions, recommended that a substitute bill be created, and inserted the provisions of HB 2210.