

Oral testimony before the Veterans/Military Committee

On

HB 2214 Enacting the safeguarding American veteran empowerment act to limit compensation for assisting in veteran benefits matters.

By

David Kennedy, Veterans of Foreign Wars

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Thank you for the opportunity to present testimony on HB 2214 is to establish guidelines and control for non-accredited representation filing claim and charging fees that are paid from Veterans compensation.

National Veterans of Foreign Wars uses the term Claim Sharks to describe an individual or company that charges fees to assist or consults veterans in filing VA claims and benefits by making promises of a higher percentage or expediated claims, which are out of the control of anyone except the VA. To support the claim, they request the veteran to do all the work for them to send to the VA, like medical records, buddy statements. Filling out forms, everything an Accredited Veteran's Service Officer would do for free. Most of the time we would file the claim in person face to face. Claim Sharks would only contact the veteran by a phone call or email from outside the State of Kansas. A Veteran would have no idea who or what they are doing with their personal information.

The description of accredited VSO according to CFR 38 14.629(a)(1); is of good character and reputation and has demonstrated and ability to represent claimants before the VA. This also includes a federal background check before a PIV card is issued. Then you will be given access to ALL of the information to every Veteran assigned to your organization. By allowing

HB 2214 would allow Claim Sharks to operate inside Kansas and take advantage of our veterans. Our job is to protect the veterans from such people who are only looking to make a profit from what is already free to every Veteran.

