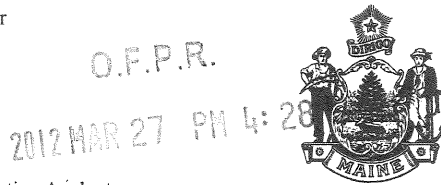


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DANIELLE FOX, Legislative Analyst  
 COLLEEN MCCARTHY REID, Legislative Analyst  
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State of Maine  
 ONE HUNDRED AND TWENTY-FIFTH LEGISLATURE  
 COMMITTEE ON VETERANS AND LEGAL AFFAIRS

March 27, 2012

To: Senator Richard Rosen, Representative Patrick Flood and members  
 Joint Standing Committee on Appropriations and Financial Affairs

From: Senator Nichi Farnham, Representative Michael Beaulieu  
 Joint Standing Committee on Veterans and Legal Affairs

**RE: Supplemental Budget Report on LD 1903**

Please accept this memorandum as the report of the Veterans and Legal Affairs Committee on the portions of the supplemental budget under our jurisdiction.

**Department of Public Safety (p. A-92)**

The committee unanimously supports the initiatives within the Department of Public Safety Gambling Control Board and the Division of Licensing and Enforcement. It should be noted that the initiatives proposed for the Gambling Control Board are nearly identical to a bill reported out by VLA, LD 1828 An Act to Protect Public Safety in the Operation of Casinos.

**Department of Defense, Veterans and Emergency Management (pp. A-23 and A-24)**

The committee unanimously supports the initiatives within our jurisdiction under DVEM. We believe that it is important to point out an ongoing issue with the sale and transfer of the National Guard Armory in Fort Kent. The sale of the armory was authorized in 2010 by LD 1759 (2010 Resolve c. 212). It is our understanding that the building has been transferred to the University of Maine at Fort Kent, but payment has not been made.

**Commission on Governmental Ethics and Election Practices (p. L-44 Part AA)**

The committee is divided on its recommendation regarding this initiative. Six members of the committee support the language put forth in part AA with the proposed amendment suggested by Commission Executive Director, Jonathan Wayne that reduces the amount of Maine Clean Election Funds transferred to the general fund in FY 12 from \$1,500,000 to \$1,300,000. (Senators Farnham and Plowman with Representatives Beaulieu, Crockett, Damon, and Johnson).

Another six members of the committee oppose the transfers as proposed and believe it is critical to reserve a minimum amount of \$1,000,000 for at least one gubernatorial candidate in 2014. Thus, they reject the transfer of \$950,000 in FY 13 and would reduce the proposed transfer of \$1,300,000 to \$1,250,000 in FY 12. (Senator Patrick and Representatives Carey, Valentino, Russell, Chipman\* and Longstaff)

*Representatives Chipman and Willette were not present for the budget worksession on this item.*

*\*Following the worksession and upon review of this memo, Rep. Chipman has expressed his support of the recommendation that maintains funding for a potential gubernatorial candidate.*

Additionally, the committee unanimously agrees that it is important to recognize that \$280,000 expected to be deposited into the fund over the course of the next two years will come, not from general fund transfers, but from voluntary tax check-offs and qualifying contributions.

#### **Additional item regarding Veterans and the Maine Veterans Memorial Cemetery System Fund**

When LD 1418 was passed last session authorizing the operation of table games in Bangor pursuant to a County referendum, the law provided that 2% of the net revenue would be dedicated to non-profit organizations whose charitable gaming operations had been harmed by the operation of large-scale for-profit gambling. Money from that purpose may not be distributed from that account until July 1, 2013. This provision in statute (see Title 8, section 1036, subsection 2-C) requires further clarification with regard to the distribution of that revenue. The committee unanimously supports an amendment to the subsection which would provide 1% of net table game revenue to the Maine Veterans Memorial Cemetery System Care Fund under Title 37-B, section 512. The other 1% would be dedicated to support veterans groups, who as a service to veterans, provide a veterans service officer to assist with the filing of claims to the Federal Veterans Administration for benefits. This money would be given as grants administered by the Director of the Bureau of Veterans Services. Organizations that receive these grants would be required to submit reports to BVS so that appropriate use of the funds is ensured. We recommend that this change be included as an amendment to the supplemental budget. Our analyst, Danielle Fox, will provide language to your staff as soon as possible.

Thank you for your consideration of our report.

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