

OFFICE OF POLICY AND LEGAL ANALYSIS

Date: 4-26-21
To: Veterans and Legal Affairs Committee
From: Sam Praver, Legislative Analyst

LD 827 An Act To Help Veterans Access Jobs, Education and Housing

SUMMARY:

Part A of this bill helps veterans access jobs in the following ways.

1. It requires the Director of the Office of Professional and Occupational Regulation within the Department of Professional and Financial Regulation to review the examination and licensing eligibility of applicants for licensure who are veterans with military service, experience and training and to waive any applicable examination and licensing fees for those veterans. Under current law, the director has discretion to conduct these reviews and to grant these fee waivers for individuals who self-identify as veterans.
2. It requires each professional licensing board within or affiliated with the department to grant a license by endorsement or a temporary license to a person who holds a comparable license in another state and who is a returning military veteran, the qualified spouse of a returning military veteran or the qualified spouse of an active duty service member. Under current law, these professional licensing boards may, but are not required to, provide licensure by endorsement or temporary licenses in these circumstances.
3. It requires each professional licensing board within or affiliated with the department to permit a returning military veteran who applies for a license less than 2 years after being discharged from active duty and whose military training and experience qualify the veteran for a license in this State to acquire a temporary license until the full license is issued.
4. It clarifies that a returning military veteran who is eligible for professional and occupational licensing assistance is a veteran of the Armed Forces of the United States who was discharged from active duty with either an honorable discharge or a general discharge under honorable conditions.
5. It authorizes the Department of Public Safety, Emergency Medical Services' Board to waive examination and initial licensing fees for a veteran with military service, experience and training who is an applicant for licensure as an emergency medical services person.
6. It authorizes the Commissioner of Public Safety to waive initial licensing fees for a veteran with military service, experience and training who is an applicant for licensure as a private security guard.

Part B helps veterans access postsecondary education in the State by requiring the University of Maine System, the Maine Community College System and the Maine Maritime Academy to each designate liaisons to provide academic counseling and benefits assistance to students who are members of the United States Armed Forces or who are veterans of the United States Armed Forces and to designate a specific location at each university or college where those students may congregate to study, to provide support to their peers and to receive assistance from the liaison.

Part C helps veterans access housing by requiring the Department of Health and Human Services, in coordination with the Director of the Maine Bureau of Veterans' Services within the Department of

Defense, Veterans and Emergency Management, to develop a method of identifying veterans who are homeless and eligible for temporary housing assistance under the Bridging Rental Assistance Program.

SPONSOR AMENDMENT REQUEST:

Remove Part A from the bill.

ISSUES RAISED AT PUBLIC HEARING:

- Department of Professional and Financial Regulation testified that the provisions of Part A were already addressed by **LD 374 in the IDEA committee**, which voted OTP-AM on a committee amendment resulting from a collaboration between Department of Professional and Financial Regulation, the United States Department of Defense, and Maine Department of Defense, Veterans and Emergency Management.

LD 374, An Act To Allow Veterans, Active Duty Service Members and Their Spouses To Apply for Temporary Occupational Licenses and Certifications

- [LD 374, electronic LD File](#)
- [LD 374, original bill and fiscal note](#)
- LD 374, Committee Amendment (*may not be publicly available yet*)
- Those affected including, Maine Bureau of Insurance, Department of Professional and Financial Regulation, Board of Licensure in Medicine, Maine Board of Dental Practice, and the State Board of Nursing all testified in opposition to this bill. Many arguing it would have the unintended consequence of a more time consuming process for licensure and that existing regulations and processes already accomplish the goal removing administrative barriers to license otherwise qualified military veterans, active duty members and/or their spouses.

TECHNICAL ISSUES:

- **Typo - Section A-4.** New language reads “The board may waive examination fees and license fees for applicants for licensure as emergency medical services persons those persons who are veterans with military service, experience and training.”
- **Section C-1.** “Persons” should probably be changed to “veterans” for consistency.

FISCAL IMPACT:

Fiscal impact information not available at time of writing.