

1 State of Arkansas  
2 91st General Assembly  
3 Regular Session, 2017  
4

# A Bill

SENATE BILL 174

5 By: Senator J. English  
6

## For An Act To Be Entitled

8 AN ACT TO AMEND THE LAW CONCERNING THE DUTIES OF THE  
9 ARKANSAS VETERANS' COMMISSION; TO INCREASE THE AMOUNT  
10 OF AUTHORIZED ANNUAL STIPENDS AND EXPENSE  
11 REIMBURSEMENT FOR MEMBERS OF THE COMMISSION IN  
12 CERTAIN CIRCUMSTANCES; AND FOR OTHER PURPOSES.  
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## Subtitle

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16 TO AMEND THE LAW CONCERNING THE DUTIES OF  
17 THE ARKANSAS VETERANS' COMMISSION; AND TO  
18 INCREASE THE AMOUNT OF AUTHORIZED ANNUAL  
19 STIPENDS AND EXPENSE REIMBURSEMENT FOR  
20 MEMBERS OF THE COMMISSION IN CERTAIN  
21 CIRCUMSTANCES.  
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24 BE IT ENACTED BY THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF THE STATE OF ARKANSAS:  
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26 SECTION 1. Arkansas Code § 20-81-104 is amended to read as follows:  
27 20-81-104. Arkansas Veterans' Commission.

28 (a) The Arkansas Veterans' Commission is established to ~~serve as an~~  
29 ~~advisory agency to the Veterans' Home;~~

30 (1) Serve as the advisory body for the Director of the  
31 Department of Veterans Affairs;

32 (2) Serve as a liaison between the Department of Veterans  
33 Affairs and a chartered nonprofit veterans organization in this state,  
34 including without limitation the:

35 (A) American Legion;

36 (B) Department of Arkansas Veterans of Foreign Wars;



1                   (C) Disabled American Veterans; and

2                   (D) Arkansas Veterans Coalition;

3                   (3) Promote and advance the interests of Arkansas veterans by  
4 meeting and acting as an advisory board to the General Assembly on all  
5 matters affecting Arkansas veterans, their dependents, and survivors,  
6 including without limitation by meeting with the members of the House  
7 Legislative, Military and Veterans Affairs Permanent Subcommittee of the  
8 House Committee on Aging, Children and Youth, Legislative and Military  
9 Affairs; and

10                   (4) Gather information and data to help improve the operation  
11 and efficiency of a Veterans' Home established under § 20-81-105 and a state  
12 veterans' cemetery established under § 20-81-112 by consulting with and  
13 coordinating with veterans commissions in other states.

14                   (b)(1) The commission shall be composed of fifteen (15) members, who  
15 shall be appointed by the Governor and confirmed by the Senate.

16                   (2) Members of the commission shall serve for five-year  
17 overlapping terms.

18                   (3) The commission shall annually elect its chair from among its  
19 membership.

20                   (4)(A) Members of the commission may receive expense  
21 reimbursement and stipends in accordance with § 25-16-901 et seq.

22                   (B)(i) Members of the commission are also authorized to  
23 attend conventions, conferences, or meetings of recognized veterans'  
24 organizations, herein defined as veterans' organizations listed in the  
25 current United States Department of Veterans Affairs Directory of Veterans  
26 Service Organizations as meeting the criteria of 38 C.F.R § 14.628, and are  
27 entitled to reimbursement for expenses incurred in attending those  
28 conventions, conferences, or meetings in accordance with procedures and  
29 limits prescribed by law or regulation for state employees.

30                                   (ii) However, a member of the commission shall not  
31 be entitled to reimbursement of the expenses authorized in subdivision  
32 (b)(4)(B)(i) of this section unless the reimbursement is approved in advance  
33 by the commission chair and the director.

34                   ~~(C)(i) Provided, a member of the commission shall not be~~  
35 ~~entitled to receive more than one thousand dollars (\$1,000) during any fiscal~~  
36 ~~year for stipends and reimbursement of expenses incurred as a member of the~~

1 ~~commission.~~

2 A member of the commission shall not receive more than one  
3 thousand dollars (\$1,000) during any fiscal year for stipends and  
4 reimbursement of expenses incurred as a member of the commission unless:

5 (a) Another member of the commission claims  
6 less than one thousand dollars (\$1,000) in stipends and reimbursement of  
7 expenses during the fiscal year; and

8 (b) The commission chairman, subject to the  
9 approval of the director, authorizes the transfer of the unclaimed funds  
10 authorized by subdivision (b)(4)(C)(i)(a) of this section to another member  
11 of the commission to be used for stipends and reimbursement expenses incurred  
12 over the authorized one thousand dollars (\$1,000).

13 (ii) However, a member of the commission shall not  
14 receive more than two thousand five hundred dollars (\$2,500) in stipends and  
15 reimbursement of expenses in any fiscal year.

16 (c)~~(1)~~ The commission shall make recommendations to the Director of  
17 the Department of Veterans Affairs for the operation and improvement of the  
18 home efficiency of a Veterans' Home established under § 20-81-105 and a state  
19 veterans' cemetery established under § 20-81-112.

20 ~~(2) The commission shall also act as an advisory board to the~~  
21 ~~General Assembly on all other matters affecting Arkansas veterans, their~~  
22 ~~dependents, and survivors.~~

23 (d) Quarterly meetings of the commission are authorized at the call of  
24 the Chair of the Arkansas Veterans' Commission.

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27 **APPROVED: 03/06/2017**  
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