

Department of Legislative Services
Maryland General Assembly
2005 Session

FISCAL AND POLICY NOTE

House Bill 30
Appropriations

(Delegate Leopold, *et al.*)

Budget and Taxation

State Personnel - Appointments in Skilled and Professional Services - Credits in
Selection Tests - Veterans with Service Connected Disability

This bill requires that a service-disabled veteran receive two points in additional credit on any selection test for placement on a list of eligible candidates for a position, provided the candidate has a minimum passing score on the selection test.

Fiscal Summary

State Effect: If this bill only applies prospectively, reprogramming the Department of Budget and Management's (DBM) computer system to accommodate the updated scoring system for service-disabled veterans could be handled with existing resources.

Local Effect: None.

Small Business Effect: None.

Analysis

Current Law: A veteran who has been honorably discharged from military service or has received a certificate of satisfactory completion of military service, the spouse of an eligible service-disabled veteran, or the surviving spouse of a deceased eligible veteran automatically receives 10 points on a selection test by the appointing authority. Exceptions to this policy are current State employees and eligible veterans who were convicted of a crime after being discharged from, or completing, military service.

Background: The federal government gives 10 additional points to the earned rating of a service-disabled veteran, the unmarried widow or widower of a veteran, and the spouse of a service-disabled veteran. All other honorably discharged veterans receive five additional points to their earned rating.

Additionally, some states give preference to service-disabled veterans over nonservice-disabled veterans. On competitive examinations in New York, service-disabled veterans receive 10 additional points for original appointment and 5 additional points for promotion; whereas nondisabled veterans receive 5 additional points for original appointment, and 2.5 points for promotion. On civil service entrance examinations in California, disabled veterans receive 15 additional points, while nondisabled veterans receive 10 additional points.

State Expenditures: The Department of Legislative Services advises that as introduced, this bill applies prospectively only to selection tests taken on or after October 1, 2005. Assuming the bill applies prospectively only, the costs associated with reprogramming DBM's computer system to accommodate the updated scoring system can be handled with existing resources. Furthermore, maintaining and updating the information for future applicants can be handled with existing resources.

DBM advises that for positions which the selection list is open continuously, there could be equity issues in allocating two additional points only to service-disabled veterans who take a selection test on or after the effective date of this bill. On selection lists that are open continuously, people who are eligible remain on the list for one year. Therefore, while on the same eligibility list, service-disabled veterans who take a qualifying examination on or after the effective date of the bill will have a two-point advantage over those who had taken the exam before the effective date of the bill.

There are currently 22,419 veterans on State employment eligibility lists. DBM advises that they are currently unaware of how many of these individuals have service connected disabilities.

If this bill were to apply to all service-disabled veterans currently on eligibility lists, DBM estimates that in fiscal 2006 it would cost \$67,257 in additional general fund personnel expenditures to implement a program in which service-disabled veterans would receive two additional points on selection examinations. This amount would pay for contractual personnel-related expenditures for updating personnel files, assuming an average of 10 minutes for additional review of each veteran's personnel file and to list the new score per veteran in the system at \$0.30 per minute. Updating DBM's database would require approximately two additional full-time contractual positions.

DBM estimates that approximately 50% of veterans' personnel files have information regarding disability status. Consequently, half of all veterans currently in the system (11,210) will have to be contacted regarding their disability status; postage alone would cost \$4,150 at \$0.37 per notice mailed.

DBM advises that the costs associated with updating the scoring methodology of the personnel selection system should be a one-time expenditure. After the disability status of veterans in the personnel system is updated, maintaining the information can be handled with existing resources.

Additional Information

Prior Introductions: None.

Cross File: None.

Information Source(s): Department of Veterans Affairs, Department of Budget and Management, Department of Legislative Services

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n/rhh

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