

2025 KCMA Kentucky General Assembly military-veterans legislation tracker

Working document

Complete through end of session, March 28, 2025

By my unofficial count, there were 1,127 bills filed and 332 resolutions filed. Very few passed. The Governor vetoed a total of 29 bills – all were successfully overridden by the Republican majority. No vetoes were used on the legislation that passed below.

Joint/Concurrent resolutions are those which must pass both chambers. Simple “resolutions” pass only one chamber, by voice vote, and do not have the effect of law.

The legislature will return to General Session on January 6, 2026. The 2026 session will be a “long” or “budget” session, with 60 working days, with the primary focus the passage of the state’s two-year budget. The interim session for committee hearings and potential legislation assessment begins in June and runs through November.

BILLS THAT PASSED AND WILL BECOME LAW

HB 1 (Petrie)

Individual Income Tax Rate Reduction

Amend KRS 141.020 to reduce the individual income tax rate from 4% to 3.5% for taxable years beginning on or after January 1, 2026.

- Key element here is that House Floor Amendment 6 (HFA 6) to HB 1 was filed, which would exempt qualified (Other Than Dishonorable) veterans from state income tax: “For taxable years beginning on or after January 1, 2026, exclude all income earned from all sources for veterans”
 - This would be a massive benefit to all qualified Kentucky veterans, bringing the veterans’ community to the legislature’s zero-state income tax goal well before the goal of the early 2030s – veterans would lead the way and get to zero state income tax first
 - I’m told the amendment was filed due to the endorsement of a veterans’ tax exemption by multiple workforce development agencies and the legislature’s Workforce Attraction & Retention Task Force
 - The associated challenge is that the established fiscal note (cost) for exempting only military retirement income tax is set at \$6.6M current 4 percent, \$5.8M at 3.5 percent
 - The Legislative Research Commission (LRC) fiscal note for all veterans, all sources, all income, came to an estimated \$166M in its first full year of implementation – too high a price tag for legislators, I’m told
 - The amendment was withdrawn from consideration, as were eight of the 11 proposed amendments
 - The three proposed amendments that were not withdrawn were defeated or ruled inappropriate
 - No amendments passed in the Senate
 - This confirms leadership remains generally opposed to modifications to their plan to get Kentucky to zero state income tax by the early 2030s, including any additional tax exemptions
- *Assigned to the House Appropriations & Revenue Committee on January 7*
- *Passed House 90-7 on January 9*
- *Passed Senate 34-3 on February 4*

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- *Signed by Governor on February 6*

HB 10 (Proctor)

Create a new section of KRS Chapter 383 to allow a property owner or his or her authorized agent to request a law enforcement officer immediately remove a person unlawfully occupying real property under certain circumstances; provide criminal and civil immunity to law enforcement officers and property owners acting in good faith; create a civil cause of action for wrongful removal; require the Department of Kentucky State Police to create a form for the petition to remove unlawful occupants; amend KRS 512.010 to define "squatter"; amend KRS 512.020 and 512.030 to specifically include damage to real property caused by squatters in the offense of criminal mischief.

- Provides for property owner protection against squatters
- *Assigned to Judiciary; reported favorably with second reading, to Rules on 2-26*
- *Passed House 93-5 on March 4; to Senate*
- *Assigned to Judiciary with second reading on March 11*
- *Reported favorably on March 12; to Senate floor vote*
- *Passed Senate 37-0 on March 14*
- *Signed by Governor on March 24*

HB 131 (Meredith)

Modifies Firefighter Work Schedules

Amend KRS 95.500 to allow, absent a collective bargaining agreement, specified fire personnel to have schedules consisting of 48 hours on duty followed by 96 hours of off duty time; specify that collective bargaining agreements maintained by a city or urban-county government may control work hours in lieu of the specified schedules.

- KCMA is tracking because firefighters are employed at Fort Campbell, Fort Knox and by the Kentucky National Guard/Department of Military Affairs
- *Assigned to Local Government*
- *Passed House 95-0 on 2-25 with committee substitute allowing for a work schedule of on duty for 24 hours, off duty for 72 hours, on duty again for 48 hours and then off duty again for 72 hours, and protecting against loss of income due to work schedule change; to Senate*
- *Passed Senate 35-0 on March 12*
- *Signed by Governor on March 17*

HB 191 (Wesley)

Amend KRS 40.315 to expand interment eligibility in Kentucky state veterans' cemeteries to include eligible National Guard and Reserve service members and their families

- The 2023 General Assembly approved the KDVA initiative to allow eligibility for veterans without Kentucky residency, but qualified as veterans under the VA standard definition
 - Many members of the Kentucky National Guard and Reserve do not earn enough operational federal days to meet the 180-day standard, especially those who are not in a frequently deployed military specialty, such as the 202nd Kentucky Army National Guard Band
- This closes that loophole to allow their burial in a KDVA operated ceremony
 - State law cannot mandate VA cover the related expenses; however, it can allow for burial access

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- It does require the servicemember completed their initial period of service and was discharged under conditions other than dishonorable
- It also allows for death while on state active duty or while serving under Title 32 of the United States Code
 - In this case of death on state active duty or under federal Title 32, the eligibility for interment of the person's spouse, surviving spouse, minor child, and dependent incapacitated child shall be determined pursuant to federal law
- Basically this same bill passed both the House and Senate last session; however, a title amendment was added in the Senate late in session and the House did not get the opportunity to concur, so the legislation failed due to the difference in language
- There was some work required over the interim when House A&R removed the dependents' eligibility clause from the working draft; however, great advocacy work by KDVA restored the provision (which mirrors federal VA policy), so the filed bill is what was desired
- *Assigned to VMAPP*
- *Passed House 93-0 on February 14; to Senate*
- *Passed Senate VMAPP favorably on 2-27; to readings and eventual Senate floor vote*
- *Passed Senate 32-0 on March 7*
- *Signed by Governor on March 15*

HB 303 (Bratcher)

Create a new section of KRS Chapter 164 to direct the Kentucky Community and Technical College System to develop academic career pathways and integrated academic bridge programs to prepare military healthcare personnel for licensure in various healthcare-related fields.

- Endorsed by KCMA, the Council on Post-Secondary Education (CPE), the Kentucky Community & Technical College System (KCTCS), and the Kentucky Board of Nursing
- Creates facilitated pathways to licensing for trained and experienced military medical personnel in a variety of fields
 - 27 fields with some amount of medical exposure/training are targeted for inclusion, including:
 - 1. Infantryman; 2. Hospital Corpsman; 3. Biomedical Equipment Specialist; 4. Orthopedic Specialist; 5. Practical Nursing Specialist; 6. Operating Room Specialist; 7. Dental Specialist; 8. Physical Therapy Specialist; 9. Patient Administration Specialist; 10. Optical Laboratory Specialist; 11. Medical Logistics Specialist; 12. Medical Laboratory Specialist; 13. Occupational Therapist Specialist; 14. Nutrition Care Specialist; 15. Cardiovascular Specialist; 16. Radiology Specialist; 17. Pharmacy Specialist; 18. Veterinarian Food Inspection Specialist; 19. Preventive Medicine Specialist; 20. Animal Care Specialist; 21. Ear, Nose, and Throat (ENT) Specialist; 22. Respiratory Specialist; 23. Combat Medic Specialist; 24. Behavioral Health Specialist; 25. Eye Specialist; 26. Independent Duty Medical Technician; and 27. Aerospace Medical Technician.
- *Assigned to Health Services*
 - *Posted favorably by committee on February 13, with committee substitute to expand list of educational institutions that may support it; to House floor*
 - *HCS 1 is a positive amendment that expands participation availability to any college or university that is a part of the postsecondary education system as defined in KRS 164.001 or a private accredited college or university*

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- *It simply makes the program more widely available*
- *Passed House 97-0 on 2-25 with committee substitute expanding participation availability to any college or university that is a part of the postsecondary education system as defined in KRS 164.001 or a private accredited college or university; to Senate*
- *Assigned to Health Services, reported favorably March 5, posted for passage March 11*
- *Passed Senate 34-0 on March 11*
- *Signed by Governor on March 19*

SB 22 (Thomas)

Allows Reciprocal Licensure (Cosmetology) if a License is obtained in a U.S. Territory
Amend KRS 317.570 and 317A.120 to allow barber and cosmetology license applicants to retake the failed portion of an examination one month after receiving actual notice of the failure; enable cosmetologist and esthetician applicants to retake any examination an unlimited number of times; amend KRS 317A.020 to allow a penalty more severe than a warning notice to be issued if a licensee knowingly employs or utilizes an unlicensed nail technician; amend KRS 317A.040 to remove the requirement that a licensed cosmetologist serve as the executive director of the Kentucky Board of Cosmetology; amend KRS 317A.100 to allow reciprocal licensure for an applicant from a United States territory.

- KCMA is tracking because of the reciprocal licensure clause for barber and cosmetology license applicants, which supports DOD-priority occupational licensing opportunities for military spouses
 - Kentucky is a member of the DOD-priority Cosmetology Licensure Compact (adopted in 2023)
- *Assigned to Licensing & Occupations*
- *Passed committee favorably on February 18; to Senate floor with second reading, floor amendment filed removing all language relating to the barber licensure examination and committee substitute allowing examinees to take exams an unlimited amount of times*
- *Passed Senate 35-2 on February 27; to House*
- *Reported favorably by House Licensing & Occupations on March 7 with committee substitute making several tweaks to requirements; first reading complete*
- *Passed House 85-2 March 14 with committee substitute*
 - *Senate concurred with CS and passed bill 36-0 on March 14*
- *Signed by Governor on March 24*

Senate Resolution (SR) 45 (Elkins)

A RESOLUTION honoring the George Rogers Clark High School Junior Reserve Officers' Training Corps for their victory at the 2024 United States Army Cadet Command Junior ROTC Raider Challenge.

- Legislators often do resolutions lauding community events/accomplishments
- *Adopted by Senate by voice vote on February 27*

SR 47 (Mays Bledsoe)

A RESOLUTION adjourning the Senate in honor and loving memory of James Edward "Ted" Bassett III.

- Mr. Bassett was a Marine in World War II, wounded in action, a leader with Keeneland racetrack, and a major supporter of the Marine Corps League, Marine Corps Coordinating Council of Kentucky and Kentucky State Police
- *Adopted by Senate by voice vote on March 14*

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SR 84 (Thompson)

Adjourn the Senate in honor and loving memory of former Senator Elizabeth Jean Tori.

- Sen. Tori was chair of the Senate VMAPP during the height of Operation Iraqi Freedom, the architect of the "Veterans Session" of 2007 and a champion for military and veteran rights and benefits
- *Adopted by Senate by voice vote on February 28*

SR 225 (Reed)

A RESOLUTION commemorating the 250th anniversary of the founding of the United States Navy.

- *Adopted by Senate on voice vote on March 14*

SR 226 (Reed)

A RESOLUTION recognizing 250 years of Kentucky's contributions in representing the United States Marine Corps in faithful service to the United States of America.

- *Adopted by Senate on voice vote on March 14*

SR 227 (Reed)

A RESOLUTION commemorating the 250th anniversary of the founding of the United States Army.

- *Adopted by Senate on voice vote on March 14*

SR 237 (Reed)

A RESOLUTION urging the Council on Postsecondary Education and the Kentucky Department of Education, in partnership with the Secretary of State and education entities, to develop strategies and a timeline for improving Kentucky students' knowledge and understanding of the constitutional republic of the United States of America and the democratic processes specified in the United States Constitution.

- *Adopted by Senate on voice vote on March 14*

BILLS THAT FAILED

HB 26 (Flannery)

Amend KRS 141.010 to define "tips" and "overtime compensation"; amend KRS 141.019 to allow an exclusion from gross income for tax purposes for tips and overtime compensation; amend KRS 141.335 to include tips and overtime compensation amounts on employee withholding statement; amend KRS 131.190 to allow the Department of Revenue to report on the exclusions.

- This legislation exempts tips and overtime pay from gross taxable income thru 2030, which is of interest to military families and Veterans Service Organizations
 - Longshot for passage because it has a fiscal note (cost), which are being strongly discouraged this non-budget session
- *Assigned to A&R*

HB 41 (Hodgson)

Establishes the Kentucky Emergency Volunteer Corps

Amend KRS 37.170 to create the Kentucky Emergency Volunteer Corps (KEV Corps) within the Kentucky State Defense Force; create a new section of KRS Chapter 37 to detail KEV Corps eligibility,

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supervision, training requirements, uniform details, and prohibitions and to create the KEV Corps fund; amend KRS 39B.030 to permit the local emergency management director to use the KEV Corps during a local disaster or emergency; amend KRS 39B.050 to include the KEV Corps as a part of the local disaster and emergency services organization; amend KRS 39B.070 to permit each city, urban-county government, or charter county government the use of the KEV Corps.

- This legislation in its original form creates the Kentucky Emergency Volunteer Corps, a form of state-sponsored and state-funded militia
 - Funding will be required for uniforms, equipment, administration and management, so there is a significant fiscal element to this legislation
 - Normally, legislation with a fiscal impact is seriously considered in even-year “budget” sessions – this is a non-budget session year
 - The Adjutant General and Emergency Management would be responsible for establishment and oversight of the program under KRS Chapter 37 (Active Militia)
 - NOTE: DMA and EM are working with the sponsor to change the bill’s language away from utilizing the militia concept in KRS 37 and towards strictly using existing structure under KRS 39 (Emergency Management)
- Militias are a very different concept from the National Guard, which is a professional military force under the shared control of the nation’s Governors and Department of Defense
 - The Militia Act of 1903, also known as the “Dick Act” for the sponsor, Congressman Charles Dick, chairman of the House Militia Affairs Committee and a Major in the Ohio National Guard, formed the predecessor to the modern-day National Guard and required the states to divide their militias into two sections
 - The law recommended the title "National Guard" for the first section, for federal administration, and "Reserve Militia" for the individual states
 - Congress further authorized separate State Militias in 1956 under Title 32, Section 109
 - This militia concept in HB 41 focuses solely on civic/emergency management response and has no military function
 - Intent is to create a volunteer service opportunity for Kentuckians in a manner of service to the Commonwealth
 - We defer to the Adjutant General and Emergency Management as to whether there is any true “need”
 - Emergency Management actions are coordinated by both the Department of Military Affairs’ Division of Emergency Management and county/local emergency management agencies, with additional support available from the Kentucky National Guard in their State Active Duty (SAD) role
 - SAD missions are state-funded, with federal authorization for the National Guard to utilize applicable federally-funded (Title 32) equipment and resources
- Only 24 states maintain some form of state militia, two of which are purely ceremonial
 - In addition to military support functions, variations on militia mission include Cyber (new), Band, Training, JAG, Medical, Finance, Ceremonial, Emergency Management (new), communications
- Informational resources include the State Defense Forces website (<https://statedefenseforce.com/main/>) and the State Guard Association of the U.S. website (<https://sgaus.org/>)

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- The primary question for this proposed legislation is not whether volunteer opportunities are a good thing (they certainly are), it's more about whether there is an operational need/requirement that justifies creation of a KEV Corps
- *Assigned to House VMAPP*

HB 70 (Grossl)

Establishes membership in the Interstate Dietician Occupational Licensing Compact

Create a new section of KRS Chapter 310 to enact and enter into the Dietitian Licensure Compact with all other jurisdictions that legally join in the compact ... (plus significantly more – joining the Compact is the priority here)

KCMA Priority Legislation

- Supported by the Kentucky Board of Licensure and Certification for Dietitians and Nutritionists and the (national) Academy of Nutrition and Dietetics
- U.S. Department of Defense State Liaison Office (DSLO) and Council of State Governments' priority compact
- Occupational licensure compacts provide consistent rules for licensed members to work in other states through interstate agreement
 - The military provisions added to these compacts assist service members and their spouses in participating through "privilege to practice policies" to more easily transfer their license to a new state
- Kentucky is a leader in this area, with the Commonwealth adopting nine of the first DOD-priority compacts
- *Assigned to Licensing, Occupations, & Administrative Regulations*
- *Passed committee unanimously on February 19; to Rules w/second reading*
- *Passed House 91-0 on March 7; to Senate*
- *Received first hearing on March 14, despite not yet being assigned to a committee*
 - *This keeps alive the Senate's options to assign the bill to committee on March 27, give it a second hearing on the same date, and pass it out of committee for consideration on the floor*
 - *The legislature would be unable to override a Governor's veto (not impossible but unlikely for this legislation), and would be at significant risk if any amendments/committee substitutes are filed in the Senate*
- *No further action taken*

HB 79 (Moser)

Allows for Licensure Grant to Active License Holders from Other States as Marriage/Family Therapist

Create a new section of KRS Chapter 335B to require the licensing authorities of healthcare occupations to collect workforce participation data during the annual, biennial, or triennial licensure renewal process; prohibit the collection of a licensee's Social Security number; allow licensees to decline the data collection of personal information; require licensing authorities to report collected data to the Cabinet for Health and Family Services; create a new section of KRS 335.300 to 335.399 to authorize the board to grant licensure to an applicant who holds an active license from another state to practice as an independent marriage and family therapist; EFFECTIVE, in part, January 1, 2027.

- KCMA is tracking because of the reciprocal licensure clause for independent marriage and family therapists, which supports DOD-priority occupational licensing opportunities for military spouses
- *Assigned to Licensing, Occupations, & Administrative Regulations*
- *Passed Committee on 2-19; to House floor with second reading, posted for passage 2-26*

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- *Passed House 94-0 Feb. 27 with minor floor amendment; to Senate*
- *Assigned to Licensing & Occupations March 4*
- *Reported favorably March 11; Second reading complete*

HB 83 (Roberts)

Create a new section of KRS Chapter 237, relating to firearms, to define "red flag law"; prohibit police department and judicial enforcement of red flag laws.

- This legislation is of interest to many Veterans Service Organization members due to its Second Amendment-related protections for gun ownership
- *Assigned to Local Government*

HB 84 (Roberts)

Create a new section of KRS Chapter 211 to provide that the Cabinet for Health and Family Services shall not promulgate any administrative regulation that implements or enforces any directives from the World Health Organization; amend KRS 211.990 to establish that any violation shall be a Class D felony.

- This legislation could affect veterans, military spouses and family members working in state and local government
 - Filed in response to the recent COVID experience to address such situations, in tandem with new presidential orders related to the WHO
- *Assigned to Judiciary*

HB 94 (Williams) – also see HB 134 (Bauman) and SB 67 (Nemes)

Propose to create a new section of the Constitution of Kentucky to exempt for homeowners who are 65 years of age or older any increase in the valuation of their permanent residence that is assessed after the later of the year the homeowner turned 65 or the year the homeowner purchased the property; require the exemption to be in addition to the exemption provided in Section 170 of the Constitution of Kentucky and notwithstanding Sections 171, 172, and 174 of the Constitution of Kentucky; apply the exemption to increases in valuation that occur after the date the amendment is ratified by the voters; provide ballot language; submit to voters for ratification or rejection.

- This proposed constitutional amendment would freeze home valuation for property owners aged 65 and over
 - Of interest to many Veterans Service Organization members
- *Assigned to Elections, Const. Amendments & Intergovernmental Affairs*

HB 113 (Griffie)

Military Motor Vehicle Usage Tax Exemption

Amend KRS 138.470 to exempt from motor vehicle usage tax any vehicle purchase outside the state by a veteran or member of the United States Armed Forces while that person was on active duty.

- Soldiers transferring into Kentucky who purchased vehicles while deployed overseas, tax exempt, incur a Kentucky motor vehicle usage tax to register their vehicles
- Per Fort Knox leadership, many of these vehicles purchased overseas are expensive brands like Mercedes/BMW/Jaguar
 - Bought with no tax due to military status, they incur a significant motor vehicle usage tax in Kentucky, forcing some to take loans to cover the cost

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- This tax is a disincentive for Kentucky residency, or even registering their vehicles in Kentucky
 - This was generated by strong grass roots push by Fort Knox enlisted leadership and is strongly supported by Knox Regional Development Alliance, Christian County Chamber of Commerce Military Affairs Committee and the military community
- This has relatively little negative budget impact - exact amount cannot be quantified - because many, if not most, soldiers transferring to Kentucky quite simply decide not to register their cars in Kentucky at all because they have to pay this tax - especially if they're registering an upscale foreign car purchased overseas
 - Eliminating this tax could increase fee collection for license plates, renewals that otherwise would not occur, so we don't anticipate a significant negative fiscal impact
- Legislative leadership remains very skeptical about any tax exemption proposals while Kentucky moves towards a zero-income tax state – a major obstacle for all tax exemption proposals
- *Assigned to A&R*

HB 133 (Doan)

Universal Recognition of Occupational Licenses

Create new sections of KRS Chapter 335B to allow universal recognition of occupational licenses and government certifications; include work experience as a basis for licensure or certification; explicitly include military personnel and their spouses; provide that the Act may be cited as the Universal Recognition of Occupational Licenses Act.

- This goes beyond military spouses and applies to all occupational licenses
- Major concern for DOD is that this only protects military spouses entering Kentucky
 - There is no protection for their license portability when transferring to another state unless that state also adopts universal licensing or is a co-member with Kentucky of an existing compact for that specific occupational license
 - Universal licensing is only truly effective if all 50 states pass similar legislation, which is problematic
 - If all 50 states can come to agreement, then this would be a great solution; however, that situation, should it ever occur, is not going to occur in the near future
 - Strong opposition exists to universal licensing in many, if not the majority, of states due to the perception that universal licensure mandates force all joining states to recognize the lowest licensure standard existing in any state
- Interstate occupational licensing compacts are the DOD-recognized military families' solution, because states agree to licensing standards in advance through negotiation and compromise through the Council of State Governments interstate compacts program
- *Assigned to Licensing, Occupations, & Administrative Regulations*

HB 134 (Bauman) – also see HB 94 (Williams) and SB 67 (Nemes)

Propose to create a new section of the Constitution of Kentucky to exempt for homeowners who are 65 years of age or older any increase in the valuation of their permanent residence that is assessed after the later of the year the homeowner turned 65 or the year the homeowner purchased the property; require the exemption to be in addition to the exemption provided in Section 170 of the Constitution of Kentucky and notwithstanding Sections 171, 172, and 174 of the Constitution of

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Kentucky; apply the exemption to increases in valuation that occur after the date the amendment is ratified by the voters; provide ballot language; submit to voters for ratification or rejection.

- This proposed constitutional amendment would freeze home valuation for property owners aged 65 and over
 - Of interest to many Veterans Service Organization members
- *Assigned to Elections, Const. Amendments & Intergovernmental Affairs*

HB 139 (Maddox)

Amend KRS 237.109 to lower the age requirement for carrying a concealed and deadly weapon from 21 to 18; amend KRS 237.110 to conform; make technical corrections.

- This legislation is of interest to many Veterans Service Organization members due to its Second Amendment-related extension of gun ownership to 18-year-old legal adults
- Companion bill to SB 75
- *Assigned to Judiciary*

HB 141 (Massaroni)

Defend the Guard Act

Create a new section of KRS Chapter 38 to restrict the use of the Kentucky National Guard outside of state active duty unless Congress officially declares war or has taken official action pursuant to the Constitution of the United States and has satisfied any outstanding balance to the Kentucky National Guard; allow the Governor to deploy the National Guard under Title 32 of the United States Code to assist in border protection, for not more than 30 days, when the governor of a state or territory has declared an invasion; provide that the Act may be cited as the Defend the Guard Act.

- The “Defend the Guard” Act is a bill that severely restricts the ability of the Governor and the Commonwealth (Kentucky National Guard) to support Department of Defense
- Part of a national initiative in the name of “state rights”
 - It assumes the National Guard operates as a state-specific “militia” – nothing could be further from the truth, as the National Guard is fully-integrated element of Department of Defense, the U.S. Army and the U.S. Air Force
 - This argument would absolutely apply to a state militia
 - Only 24 states maintain some version of state militia (two of which are solely ceremonial) due to the onerous cost of maintaining the mission and the professionalism of a militia force
- This legislation could result in the loss of hundreds of millions of dollars, or more, to the Kentucky National Guard in federal funding, some of which would have to be picked up by the state
 - What need does the federal government and Department of Defense have for the Kentucky National Guard (personnel and equipment), if they cannot utilize our units?
 - Potential exists this could be an existential threat to state National Guards
 - Not one single state in this nation has passed the “Defend the Guard Act” to date, despite several years of socialization and debate, precisely because it is such massively flawed (and risky) legislation
- *Assigned to VMAPP*

HB 186 (Duvall)

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Amend KRS 217.127 to define "charitable food donor" as a nonprofit or religious organization that is recognized as tax exempt under Section 501(c)(3) of the Internal Revenue Code or home-based processor, which produces food for distribution to a homeless shelter or to individuals displaced due to a declared natural disaster; exempt a charitable food donor from the licensing requirements of KRS 217.005 to 217.215 and application of State Plumbing Code requirements; amend KRS 217.218 to conform; amend KRS 411.241 to exempt a nonprofit or religious organization that is recognized as tax exempt under Section 501(c)(3) of the Internal Revenue Code or a home-based processor from civil or criminal liability arising from the production or donation of food to a homeless shelter or to individuals displaced due to a declared natural disaster.

- This legislation simplifies or removes government "red tape" to facilitate food donations to shelters/hungry from many sources
 - Many Veterans Service Organizations partake in this activity and may be interested in this legislation
- *Assigned to Agriculture*
- *Passed committee favorably on February 19; to House floor*
- *Passed House 92-0 on Feb. 21; to Senate*
- *Assigned to Agriculture March 4; reported favorably March 11*
- *Second reading March 12, to Rules*

HB 192 (McPherson)

Income Taxation of Military Pensions.

Amend KRS 141.019 to exclude all distributions from military pension plans received by retired members of the United States military and National Guard and their surviving spouse or former spouse under a survivor benefit plan from income taxation for taxable years beginning on or after January 1, 2026, but before January 1, 2030; require reporting by the Department of Revenue; amend KRS 131.190 to conform.

- Rep. McPherson took this one over at the request of the previous annual sponsor, Rep. Walker Thomas
- This legislation would exempt all DOD-paid military retirement income tax through December 2029, in anticipation of a full exemption for all Kentuckians in the 2030s
 - All pensions are currently exempt through \$31,100
- No movement for not just years, but decades; considered unfunded mandate
- Long-time KDMA and KCMA priority, administration endorsed in 2020, not in budget bill but growing support a strong plus
 - Endorsed by Kentucky's Joint Executive Council of Veterans Organizations (JECVO); favored by several state workforce development agencies and the legislature's Workforce Attraction & Retention Task Force as a workforce recruitment and retention investment (along with a general tax exemption for all veterans – see HFA 6 to HB 1 above, in which HFA 6 was ultimately not adopted)
- Policy exists in varying forms in some 35 states, including our surrounding states
- While still a longshot in any form, even more so in a non-budget year, should this proposal progress, it will almost certainly be written into budget legislation versus passing as a stand-alone bill
- *Assigned to A&R*

HB 250 (Calloway)

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Create a new section of KRS Chapter 383 to allow a property owner or his or her authorized agent to request a law enforcement officer to immediately remove a person unlawfully occupying a residential dwelling or other structure under certain circumstances; provide criminal and civil immunity to law enforcement officers and property owners acting in good faith; create a civil cause of action for wrongful removal; create a new section of KRS Chapter 523 to establish the offense of making a false statement to detain real property.

- Protections for property owners against squatters
- *Assigned to Judiciary*

HB 277 (Wesley)

Amend KRS 95A.292 to allow rescue squad members to participate in the Alan "Chip" Terry Professional Development and Wellness Program; create a new section of KRS Chapter 39F to direct the Division of Emergency Management and the Kentucky Fire Commission to enter into an agreement to ensure that rescue squad members have access to the program.

- Mental health support initiative for First Responders
- *Assigned to VMAPP*

HB 281 (Roberts)

Amend KRS 139.010, relating to sales and use taxes, to define "ammunition," "antique firearm," "body armor," "firearm," "firearm muffler or silencer," "firearm-related accessory," "firearm safety course," "firearm safety device," and "firearm storage device"; amend KRS 139.480 to exempt ammunition, antique firearms, body armor, firearms, firearm-related accessories, firearm safety courses, firearm safety devices, firearm storage devices, noise cancelling ear protection, and admissions or program fees related to certain firearm-related activities; EFFECTIVE July 1, 2025.

- Adds numerous detailed definitions for firearms and exempts multiple categories from retail sales requirements
- *Assigned to A&R*

HB 308 (Doan)

Create a new section of KRS Chapter 2 to exempt the Commonwealth of Kentucky from the advancement of time known as daylight saving time; require the Commonwealth of Kentucky and its political subdivisions to at all time observe the standard time of the United States; EFFECTIVE October 31, 2025.

- Opts Kentucky out of observing Daylight Savings Time
- *Assigned to State Government*

HB 323 (Frazier Gordon)

Amend KRS 61.315 to make a technical correction and include additional cancers which, when they are the cause of death of a firefighter, would make the firefighter eligible for death benefits.

- Adds the following cancer types: Hematopoietic, Mesothelioma, Esophageal cancer, Lung cancer, Rectal cancer, Thyroid cancer, Intestinal cancer, Multiple myeloma cancer, Buccal cancer, Pharyngeal cancer
- *Assigned to Local Government*

HB 328 (Elliott)

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Create a new section of KRS Chapter 150 to define "state historic battlefield site" and to prohibit hunting on state historic battlefield sites unless approved by the Department of Parks and authorized by the Department of Fish and Wildlife Resources Commission in order to meet specific goals of a wildlife management plan for the area; amend KRS 150.990 to establish penalties.

- Defines "state historic battlefield site" as those public properties owned or maintained by the Department of Parks containing a battlefield site recognized by the Kentucky Military Heritage Commission on its latest Kentucky Military Sites Report
 - NOTE: The KCMA executive director chairs the Kentucky Military Heritage Commission
- Also bans hunting on these sites without prior written permission of the Department of Parks
- *Assigned to Tourism & Outdoor Recreation*

HB 329 (Kulkarni)

Amend KRS 65.870 to allow local governments to enact ordinances regulating firearms; amend KRS 65.1591 and 237.115 to conform.

- Many veterans own firearms and would be affected
- *Assigned to Local Government*

HB 331 (Brown)

Create a new section of KRS Chapter 237 to require background checks for private firearms sales and transfers; amend KRS 237.990 to establish a penalty for violations.

- Many veterans own firearms and would be affected
- *Assigned to Judiciary*

HB 343 (Hart)

Create new sections of KRS Chapter 311A to create the EMS Professionals Foundation Program fund; specify the ambulance services and EMS professionals that are eligible to share in the distribution of the fund; provide that the Board of Emergency Medical Services shall administer the fund and may promulgate administrative regulations to facilitate its administration; authorize reimbursement for an EMS professional's out-of-pocket costs for mental health treatment for a diagnosed post-traumatic stress injury or post-traumatic stress disorder; provide for annual supplements to ambulance providers for each EMS professional it employs; amend KRS 42.190 and 136.392 to include the EMS Professionals Foundation Program fund to the premium surcharge; amend KRS 61.315 to include eligibility for in the line of duty death benefits to specified ambulance service providers as defined in Section 1 of this Act.

- Tracking due to PTSD treatment reimbursement to EMS professionals
- *Assigned to VMAPP*

HB 409 (Grossberg)

Create a new section of KRS Chapter 237 to require a waiting period of five business days between the sale and transfer of a firearm; amend KRS 237.990 to establish a penalty for a violation.

- Many veterans own firearms and would be affected
- *Assigned to Judiciary*

HB 410 (Grossberg)

Amend KRS 527.010 to define "assault weapon" and "large capacity ammunition feeding device"; create new sections of KRS Chapter 527 to criminalize possession and transfer of large capacity ammunition feeding devices; criminalize the possession and transfer of assault weapons; provide

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exceptions for large capacity ammunition feeding devices and assault weapons lawfully owned prior to the effective date of this Act; amend KRS 237.104 to conform.

- Many veterans own firearms and may be affected
- *Assigned to Judiciary*

HB 420 (Burke)

Amend KRS 342.0011, relating to workers' compensation, to expand the definition of "injury" to include psychological injuries for police officers, firefighters, emergency medical services personnel, front-line staff members, or members of the National Guard; create a new section of KRS Chapter 342 to establish when psychological injuries are valid workers' compensation claims when not a direct result of a physical injury.

- Repeat of last year's HB 363, which received no consideration
- Workers comp would include psychological injuries suffered by Guard personnel on State Active Duty
- Concern of legislature and state workers comp program is this adoption would likely create significant additional fiscal burden
- *Assigned to Economic Development & Workforce Investment*

HB 468 (Griffiee)

Create a new section of KRS Chapter 2 to adopt the Green Star flag as the Commonwealth's symbol of continued awareness of military service member and veteran suicide, commitment to recognize and resolve military service member and veteran suicide, and remembrance and honor for the service of those who have died by suicide and their families.

- The optional provision makes it a local community decision whether to support, which is appropriate
- Challenge for legislature is if you accept one flag, then you almost have to accept all flags
 - Exception is the nationally recognized POW/MIA flag
- There has been no movement for legislation that adds flags to the POW/MIA flag over the past several years
 - They may pass the House; however, they always die in the Senate
- *Assigned to Elections, Const. Amendments & Intergovernmental Affairs; moved to VMAPP*

HB 480 (Lewis)

Amend KRS 335.030 to add gender-neutral language (Occupational Licensing).

- This is what is called a "mule" bill – submitted for easy access late in the session to be amended for other purposes, if needed
- *Assigned to Licensing, Occupations, & Administrative Regulations*

HB 492 (Raymer)

Create a new section of KRS Chapter 48 to define "illegal alien"; prohibit state tax dollars appropriated by the General Assembly from being used to compensate an illegal alien; direct the Kentucky Office of Homeland Security to assist in the implementation and enforcement of the Act.

- Action that would be taken against supporting "illegal alien" activity in Kentucky
- *Assigned to VMAPP*

HB 496 (Pollack)

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Amend KRS 189.292 to define "operating a motor vehicle," "stand-alone electronic device," and "use"; prohibit the use of a personal communication device or stand-alone electronic device while operating a motor vehicle; exempt school bus operators who are instead subject to KRS 281A.205; set forth exceptions; amend KRS 189.294 to provide that persons under 18 years of age shall not use a personal communication device or stand-alone electronic device in any manner while driving; amend KRS 189.990 to set forth penalties; create a new section of KRS Chapter 281A to apply these provisions to commercial motor vehicle drivers; amend KRS 189.2327 to conform; provide that the Act may be cited as the Phone-Down Kentucky Act.

- Very similar to SB 99, which is moving in the Senate
- Kentucky Department of Transportation priority bill
- Prohibits use of personal communication devices while driving
- *Assigned to Transportation*

HB 503 (Lawrence)

Propose to create a new section of the Constitution of Kentucky to exempt from state and local property taxes real property maintained as the permanent residence of an owner who is an active-duty member or honorably discharged veteran of the United States Armed Forces, the United States Reserve Forces, or the Kentucky National Guard; require the owner to file paperwork with the local assessor to receive the exemption; provide that the exemptions supersede contrary provisions of Sections 170, 171, 172, and 174 of the Constitution of Kentucky; apply the exemptions to property assessed on or after January 1, 2027; provide ballot language; submit to voters for ratification or rejection.

- This would be an amazing benefit the people of Kentucky could vote to military service members and veterans
 - Requires a constitutional amendment
 - Significant cost associated, with lost revenue to state and local government – no fiscal impact statement has been issued yet, likely a long-shot due to fiscal impact
- *Assigned to Elections, Const. Amendments & Intergovernmental Affairs*

HB 505 (Moore)

Create a new section of Subchapter 12 of KRS Chapter 154 to create the Veteran-Owned Small Business and Entrepreneur Loan Program to be administered by the Office of Entrepreneurship; establish requirements and program details; create the Veteran-Owned Small Business and Entrepreneur Loan Program fund from which the office provides loans to qualified veterans of not more than \$50,000.

- Rep. Moore has introduced this bill for “socialization” in this non-budget session, so it is unlikely to pass this year – and if it does, it is likely to be unfunded, pending the next budget session
- The bill creates the Veteran-Owned Small Business Entrepreneur Loan Program fund; however, it does not establish funding for it
- Under its terms, the Office of Entrepreneurship shall provide a loan from the Veteran-Owned Small Business Entrepreneur Loan Program fund (when funded) to a qualified veteran of not more than fifty thousand dollars (\$50,000) for:
 - The purchase of a business or business property
 - The occupational or business certification or license fee of the loan applicant
 - Start-up funds or capital
- Loan terms cannot exceed (10) years

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- *Assigned to VMAPP*

HB 551 (Bauman)

Create a new section of KRS Chapter 337 to require the Kentucky Department of Veterans' Affairs to create and distribute a veterans' benefits and services document to employers and require employers to keep copies of a veterans' benefits and services document in a conspicuous and accessible place.

- Intent is clearly good – appraising veterans and employers of rights and responsibilities is a very positive step – defer to KDVA for budget and staff impact
 - More a staff workload versus actual expense issue, assuming the document can be placed on the KDVA website for download
 - If the document must be printed and distributed by the state, that is far more significant
- Most likely a mixed reception from employers, who may consider this a positive step yet may be concerned about any additional bureaucratic burden
- The U.S. Department of Labor is required to provide relevant employment posters – this may be a duplicative responsibility
- No movement last two sessions
- *Assigned to VMAPP*

HB 560 (Stevenson)

Amend KRS 164.507 to remove degree-seeking requirement for nonremarried spouse and children of a deceased veteran when utilizing educational benefits; require students to use federal grant funds toward tuition prior to the use of the waiver; amend KRS 164.515 to expand educational benefit to include service members with a disability rating of 50% or higher; remove degree-seeking requirement; require students to use federal grant funds toward tuition prior to the use of the waiver.

- Intent is clearly positive – very difficult to pass any bill with a fiscal impact, which this has by lowering the qualifying disability rating; not endorsed by the Kentucky university system
- *Assigned to VMAPP*

HB 561 (Stevenson)

Create a new section of KRS Chapter 2 to designate June 12 of each year as Women Veterans Appreciation Day in the Commonwealth; EMERGENCY.

- “Women’s Veterans’ Day” is a deserved acknowledgement of then-President Dwight Eisenhower officially integrating women into the regular Armed Forces
- This provides an enhancement to Veterans Day without replacing it, honoring the unique contributions of women veterans
- Congress has designated June 12 as Women Veterans’ Recognition Day
- The Emergency clause makes it effective immediately upon passage
 - Necessary because standard legislation will not become effective until late June or early July 2025
- *Assigned to State Government*

HB 563 (Stevenson)

Amend KRS 40.050 to include gender-neutral language.

- This is what is called a “mule” bill – submitted for easy access late in the session to be amended for other purposes, if needed
- *Assigned to VMAPP*

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HB 565 (Stevenson)

Amend KRS 12.245, 12.354, 14A.1-070, 16.040, 40.010, 40.310, 40.650, 42.0146, 148.0211, 158.105, 158.140, 161.048, 164.512, 164.515, 186.041, 186.163, and 186.416 to make certain LGBTQ and qualifying veterans, as defined, eligible for state veterans' benefits.

- In the post World War II era, many members of the Armed Forces were forced out of service due to LGBTQ association
 - The new Presidential administration is currently rolling back protections for related military personnel
- This bill seeks to provide a state remedy for those who were forced out under prior standards
 - While these benefits may still conflict in areas with federal law - states can't define federal policy or force federal compliance/acknowledgment - states can offer state-specific benefits, which in Kentucky would be primarily assessed through the recommendation of KDVA, which should play the lead role in determining what options are realistic to support
- This legislation has not moved in prior sessions and will require majority party support for any true assessment
- *Assigned to VMAPP*

HB 573 (Dossett)

AN ACT relating to allowing the Freedom Flag to be flown as a Flag of Remembrance each September 11, which is known as Patriot Day.

- The optional provision makes it a local community decision whether to support, which is appropriate
- Challenge for legislature is if you accept one flag, then you almost have to accept all flags
 - Exception is the nationally recognized POW/MIA flag
- There has been no movement for legislation that adds flags to the POW/MIA flag over the past several years
- These bills tend to pass the House and die without action in the Senate, which has several veteran Senators who do not favor adding to the POW/MIA flag
- *Assigned to State Government*

HB 581 (Burke)

Create new sections of KRS Chapter 237 to define "safe storage depository" and require an owner or custodian of a firearm to store the firearm in a safe storage depository or render the firearm incapable of being fired using a gun-locking device; require an owner or other person lawfully in possession of a firearm or any person who sells ammunition to report the loss or theft of the firearm or ammunition to a law enforcement agency; amend KRS 237.990 to establish penalties for violations.

- This legislation is of interest to many Veterans Service Organization members
- *Assigned to Elections, Const. Amendments & Intergovernmental Affairs*

HB 604 (Hart)

Amend KRS 75.040 to increase the maximum property tax rate that can be levied by a fire protection district or a volunteer fire department district; limit any increase in the total tax levy beyond the initially approved levy to two cents per \$100 of assessed valuation a year; require a public hearing and notification to the public for rate levy; exempt the rates from the provisions of KRS 132.023; amend

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KRS 75A.050 to increase the maximum property tax rate that can be levied by a district that provides fire services, emergency medical services, and rescue services; limit any increase in the total tax levy beyond the initially approved levy to two cents per \$100 of assessed valuation a year; require a public hearing and notification to the public for rate levy; exempt tax increases from the provisions of KRS 132.023; EFFECTIVE January 1, 2026.

- Allows for a measured property tax increase to help local governments pay for the rising cost of emergency services
 - Current legislative policy is to avoid tax reform; however, emergency services need may be an exception to the rule
- *Assigned to Appropriations & Revenue*

HB 639 (Griffie)

Create a new section of KRS Chapter 132, relating to state and local property taxes, to establish a new homestead exemption for veterans with a service-connected disability; establish requirements for the exemption; allow the permanent residence of a veteran's surviving spouse to continue to receive the exemption; require the Department of Revenue to prescribe forms and an application process for the exemption; apply the exemption to state, county, city, and special district taxes; allow mobile homes, manufactured houses, recreational homes, and modular homes to qualify for the exemption; require title transfers on property receiving the exemption to be reported to the property valuation administrator; allow the exemption to apply to the value of the property that is assessable to the owner or proportioned to his or her interest when the property is jointly owned or owned through a stock or membership corporation; allow partial or full refunds if an overpayment occurs upon application of the exemption; apply to property assessed on or after January 1, 2026.

- Provides a homestead tax exemption to disabled veterans and their surviving spouses
 - Exemption percentage is graduated based on their VA disability percentage, starting at 10 percent and rising to 100 percent
- Current legislative policy is to avoid tax reform while in the process of taking the state to a zero-percent state income tax rate; similar legislation in previous sessions has simply not progressed
- *Assigned to Appropriations & Revenue*

HB 657 (Bratcher)

Create a new section of KRS Chapter 2 to define and designate the Honor and Remember flag as the state's emblem of the service and sacrifice of members of the United States Armed Forces who gave their lives in the line of duty; specify locations, dates, and circumstances under which the flag may be displayed; provide that if Congress designates a flag to honor those service members who gave their lives in the line of duty, then that flag shall be used instead of the flag created by Honor and Remember, Inc.

- This is voluntary, desired by Gold Star Families
 - Support has been slowly growing, so has potential, but no solid traction for years (this particular bill was last filed in 2023)
- The optional provision makes it a local community decision whether to support, which is appropriate
- Challenge for legislature is if you accept one flag, then you almost have to accept all flags
 - Exception is the nationally recognized POW/MIA flag
- There has been no movement for legislation that adds flags to the POW/MIA flag over the past several years
 - They may pass the House; however, they always die in the Senate

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- *Assigned to State Government*

HB 672 (Bray)

Amend KRS 42.722 to define terms relating to artificial intelligence; amend KRS 42.726 to require the Commonwealth Office of Technology to establish and implement policy standards for the use of artificial intelligence; create a new section of KRS 42.700 to create the Artificial intelligence Governance Committee; task the committee with the establishment of responsible, ethical, and transparent procedures for the allowable use, development, and approval of artificial intelligence for any department, program, cabinet, agency, and administrative body that uses and accesses the Commonwealth's information technology and technology infrastructure; require public disclosure of any use of artificial intelligence; provide employee education and training; prioritize personal privacy and protection of the data of individuals and businesses; require the Commonwealth Office of Technology to promulgate administrative regulations; amend KRS 117.001 to define "electioneering communication," "information content provider," "interactive computer service," "sponsor," and "synthetic media"; create a new section of KRS Chapter 117 to establish a cause of action for the use of synthetic media in an electioneering communication; establish an affirmative defense that the electioneering communication includes a conspicuous disclosure; provide that the sponsor of the electioneering communication may be held liable, but the medium and its advertising sales representative are not liable, except in certain circumstances; EMERGENCY.

- Creates a state artificial intelligence (AI) program, creates the Artificial intelligence Governance Committee, and multiple related actions
- Obviously AI is a growing concern everyone needs to get ahead of – likely to have a fiscal impact, so it could be passed this session as an unfunded mandate, with funding to follow next year
- *Assigned to State Government*

HB 736 (Koch)

Create a new section of KRS Chapter 40 to limit the compensation for advising or assisting with veterans' benefits; prohibit persons seeking compensation for advising, assisting, or consulting on a veterans' benefits matter from utilizing international call or data centers, directly or aggressively soliciting business, gaining access to personal medical, financial, or benefits log-in or password information, charging late fees, and utilizing a doctor with whom they have an employment or business relationship; limit the fee for representation; provide that attorneys and law firms seeking to receive compensation for advising, assisting, or consulting any individual with any veterans' benefits matter shall be governed by limitations set forth in 38 C.F.R. sec. 14.636.

- Companion bill to SB 198, except that SB 198 caps the fee charged to the veteran at three times the monthly increase in VA benefits awarded, while HB 736 caps the fee charged to the veteran at five times the monthly increase in VA benefits awarded, not to exceed \$12,500
 - Reality is these amounts are statistically insignificant in their overall impact
- This is the "Claim Shark" bill that attempts to limit the fees a paid VA claims advocate can charge a veteran the organization represents
 - In this version, the "Fees for representation or assistance shall not include late fees or interest and shall not exceed five (5) times the one (1) month increase in benefits, not to exceed twelve thousand five hundred dollars (\$12,500)
 - No initial or nonrefundable fee shall be charged
 - The bill also provides multiple common-sense restrictions to govern the proper behavior of such organizations
 - Forbids compensation for referring to another person to a paid provider

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- Requires valid written contracts when compensation is involved
 - Forbids use of call centers and aggressive tactics
 - Forbids use of secondary medical exams by a partnering physician
 - Requires a provided mandatory qualifying statement – *"This business is not sponsored by, or affiliated with, the United States Department of Veterans Affairs or the Kentucky Department of Veterans' Affairs, or any other federally chartered veterans' service organization. Other organizations, including but not limited to the Kentucky Department of Veterans' Affairs, a local veterans' service organization, and other federally chartered veterans' service organizations may be able to provide you with this service free of charge. Products or services offered by this business are not necessarily endorsed by any of these organizations. You may qualify for other veterans' benefits beyond the benefits for which you are receiving services here."*
 - A violation of this section shall constitute an unfair, false, misleading, or deceptive act or practice in the conduct of trade or commerce under KRS 367.170
 - Paid providers remain governed by the limitations set in federal Title 38 22 C.F.R. sec. 14.63
- Veterans can receive this service for free through VSOs and KDVA; however, they are also free to retain a paid provider if that is their preference
 - The intent of this legislation is to ensure fair treatment of the veteran
 - **Assigned to VMAPP; two Readings complete (means that a formal vote is anticipated) but no committee action to this point**
 - **With changes made on 2-27 to SB 198, which passed Senate VMAPP, SB 198 is expected to be the priority bill**

HB 761 (Wesley)

Amend KRS 186.020 to allow members of the National Guard or Reserves that are stationed or assigned to a base or location outside the boundaries of the United States, to renew their registration within 30 days of his or her return; allow an individual serving in the United States Armed Forces, the National Guard, or Reserves to renew their motor vehicle registration up to 280 days prior to its expiration if the person will be outside the boundaries of the Commonwealth when the current motor vehicle registration expires; require the applicant to provide military orders documenting the need for early vehicle registration; amend KRS 186.416 to allow an individual serving in the United States Armed Forces, the National Guard, or Reserves or their spouse to renew their operator's license up to 280 days prior to its expiration if the person will be outside the boundaries of the Commonwealth when the operator's license expires; require the applicant to provide military orders documenting the need for early operator's license renewal; allows a resident of the National Guard or Reserves that has been stationed or assigned to a base or other location outside the boundaries of the Commonwealth to renew his or her operator's license within 90 days of returning to the Commonwealth.

- Common-sense bill making it easier for National Guard and Reserve personnel who are either currently deployed, returning from deployment, or facing imminent deployment to keep motor vehicle registration current
 - Passage will likely depend on the ability of the Transportation Cabinet to support it
- *Assigned to Transportation*

HB 762 (Freeland)

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Create a new section of KRS Chapter 313 to adopt the Interstate Dental and Dental Hygiene Licensure Compact; declare the intent and purpose of the compact; define terms; establish conditions under which an individual can practice in a remote state; authorize a home state to impose adverse action against an individual's license issued by the home state; authorize a member state's licensing authority to issue subpoenas for hearings and investigations as well as cease and desist orders to restrict, suspend, or revoke an individual's privilege to practice in the state; establish the Interstate Dental and Dental Hygiene Licensure Compact Commission; provide immunity from suit and liability for members, officers, executive director, employees, and representatives of the commission who act in accordance with the provisions of the compact; authorize the executive, judicial, and legislative branches of state government to enforce the provisions of the compact; establish rulemaking procedures; authorize the commission to attempt to resolve disputes related to the compact that arise among member states and between member and nonmember states; require provisions of the compact to become effective on the date the compact is enacted into law in the fifth compact state; establish withdrawal provisions for a member state that wishes to withdraw from the compact; provide for severability for any provision in the compact that is contrary to the constitution of any member state or of the United States or the applicability thereof to any government, agency, person, or circumstance.

- UPDATE – this is an alternative and competing compact to the U.S. Department of Defense State Liaison Office (DSLO) and Council of State Governments' priority compact – it is not supported by the Kentucky Board of Dentistry or the DOD Defense State Liaison Office
- In general, occupational licensure compacts provide consistent rules for licensed members to work in other states through interstate agreement
 - The military provisions added to these compacts assist service members and their spouses in participating through "privilege to practice policies" to more easily transfer their license to a new state
- Kentucky is a leader in this area, with the Commonwealth adopting nine of the first DOD-priority compacts
- *Assigned to Licensing & Occupations*

HB 776 (Bratcher)

Amend KRS 38.030 to entitle Kentucky National Guard members to receive hazardous duty incentive pay when called to service under Title 32 when an emergency is declared; amend KRS 138.470 to exempt active members of the Armed Forces assigned to Kentucky who are on temporary duty in other locations and current members of the Kentucky National Guard from motor vehicle usage tax on vehicles purchased from Kentucky motor vehicle dealers; amend KRS 164.5161 to allow current National Guard members and their dependents up to 120 total credit hours at a postsecondary institution; allow the total number of credit hours to be transferrable between the service member and his or her dependent; grant authority to the adjutant general to award up to 45 additional credit hours within the program.

- Allows Kentucky National Guard members performing federal duty on Title 32 (National Guard federal duty) in response to a state emergency to be paid state hazardous duty incentive pay at "reasonable" rates under state law
- Expands the current motor vehicle usage tax exemption from active duty (on orders) to all National Guard and Reserve personnel, in any status
- Add dependent eligibility to the Kentucky National Guard Tuition Assistance Program and defines the benefit at 120 credit hours

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- Allows the Adjutant General the discretion to award an additional 45 hours of credit if the area of study has material benefit to Kentucky National Guard operations
- This legislation will have a fiscal impact, no fiscal note yet determined, which makes it a challenge to pass
- *Assigned to VMAPP*

House Concurrent Resolution (HCR) 19 (Lewis)

A CONCURRENT RESOLUTION urging the United States Congress to allow users of medical cannabis to own firearms.

- *Assigned to Elections, Const. Amendments & Intergovernmental Affairs*
- *WITHDRAWN*

House Joint Resolution (HJR) 38 (Massaroni)

Designate a bridge on United States Highway 31E in Nelson County as the Nelson County Veterans Bridge.

- The bridge spanning the Beech Fork River on United States Highway 31E in Nelson County
- *Assigned to Transportation*

HJR 39 (Massaroni)

Direct the Transportation Cabinet to designate the new bypass connecting KY Route 245 and US 62 in Nelson County as the Sons of Bardstown Memorial Highway.

- This resolution honors “the Sons of Bardstown, also known as the Louisville Legion, were Kentucky’s Second Howitzer Battalion, 138th Field Artillery, Battery C, in the United States Army during the Vietnam War” and their June 19, 1969, combat action at Firebase Tomahawk
- *Assigned to Transportation*

HJR 42 (Laferty)

Direct the Transportation Cabinet to designate the Donald V. Horne Memorial Bridge in Floyd County and erect appropriate signs.

- This resolution honors Army Vietnam War veteran and American Legion member Donald Horne
- *Assigned to Transportation*

HJR 43 (Gooch)

Direct the Transportation Cabinet to designate the northern portion of the newly relocated United States Route 641 in Caldwell, Crittenden, and Lyon Counties as the Representative Mike Cherry Memorial Highway.

- This resolution honors former State Senator and U.S. Navy veteran Mike Cherry
- *Assigned to Transportation*

HR 48 (Lewis)

A RESOLUTION urging the United States Congress to allow users of medical cannabis to own firearms.

- Of interest to many veterans
- *Assigned to Judiciary*

HJR 55 (Dossett)

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Direct the Transportation Cabinet to designate KY 117 in Christian County from mile point 7.3 to mile point 13.2 as the POW/MIA Trail.

- Intent is to recognize American prisoners of war and their missing comrades
- *Assigned to Transportation*

HR 57 (Thompson)

Encourage the Kentucky Historical Society, in collaboration with the Kentucky Department of Education, to commemorate the 250th anniversary of the United States of America; provide that the Resolution may be cited as the Kentucky's Kids Remembering America's Path to Independence Act.

- Intent is to facilitate primary school student recognition of American history
- *Assigned to House Floor on March 11*

HR 59 (Chester-Burton)

Recognize August 21, 2025, as Kentucky Senior Citizens Day.

- A great many Kentucky veterans are senior citizens!
- *Not yet assigned to committee or floor*

HJR 63 (Blanton)

Direct the Transportation Cabinet to designate the Robert Ritchie Memorial Highway in Magoffin County and erect appropriate signage.

- Robert Ritchie served in the United States Army during World War II, where he was awarded an Asiatic Pacific Theater Ribbon, an American Defense Service Ribbon, a Combat Infantryman Badge, a Battle Star for the Invasion of New Guinea, and a Good Conduct Medal
- The Transportation Cabinet shall designate Kentucky Route 378 in Magoffin County, at mile point 5.5, to the intersection of Paddle Branch Road, as the "Robert Ritchie Memorial Highway"
- *Assigned to Transportation*

SB 32 (Yates)

Omnibus Veterans Bill on Reporting/New Agency Mission Requirements

Amend KRS 154.12-330 to give preference to veterans in the issuance of small business loans; create a new section of KRS Chapter 151B to require monthly veteran workforce reports; create new sections of Subchapter 12 of KRS Chapter 154 to require annual job training reports by the Kentucky Commission on Military Affairs; require a report on occupational licenses by the Kentucky Commission on Military Affairs; create a new section of KRS Chapter 311 to require the Kentucky Board of Medical Licensure to review licensing practices for nurses and physicians assistants for military reciprocity through promulgation of administrative regulations; create new sections of KRS Chapter 164 to grant college credit to certain veterans; provide additional flexibility in college scheduling and registration to veterans; amend KRS 40.317 to expand the Kentucky Department of Veterans' Affairs' assistance to veterans in navigating healthcare; create new sections of KRS Chapter 40 to direct the Kentucky Department of Veterans' Affairs to increase access to healthcare for veterans; ensure veterans have access to mental health care; direct the Kentucky Department of Veterans' Affairs to end veteran homelessness.

- The stated goals of this legislation are admirable; however, elements of the KDVA requirements are duplicative of the federal Veterans Affairs (VA) mission and should not be a state responsibility

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- The cost to implement this legislation will be quite significant, with both KDVA and KCMA required to add additional employees, with associated office space and supply/personnel requirements
 - With no associated funding mechanism, this is an unfunded mandate
 - Much of these elements are either duplicative with federal agencies and/or have a data collecting mission better achieved through workforce development agencies
 - KCMA only has two staff and doesn't have the resources to manage the new KCMA data collecting and reporting requirements without additional employee(s)
 - This legislation has failed to progress in prior sessions
- *Assigned to VMAPP*

SB 67 (Nemes)

Propose to create a new section of the Constitution of Kentucky to exempt for homeowners who are 65 years of age or older any increase in the valuation of their permanent residence and contiguous real property that is assessed after the later of the year the homeowner turned 65 or the year the homeowner purchased the property; require the exemption to be in addition to the exemption provided in Section 170 of the Constitution of Kentucky and notwithstanding Sections 171, 172, and 174 of the Constitution of Kentucky; apply the exemption to increases in valuation that occur after the date the amendment is ratified by the voters; provide ballot language; submit to voters for ratification or rejection.

- This proposed constitutional amendment would freeze home valuation for property owners aged 65 and over
 - Of interest to many Veterans Service Organization members
- *Assigned to State & Local Government*
- *Reported favorably on February 12; second reading on February 14; to Senate floor*
- *Passed Senate 32-3 on February 20; to House*

SB 75 (Reed)

Amend KRS 237.109 to lower the age requirement for carrying a concealed and deadly weapon from 21 to 18; amend KRS 237.110 to conform; make technical corrections.

- This legislation is of interest to many Veterans Service Organization members due to its Second Amendment-related extension of gun ownership to 18-year-old legal adults
- Companion bill to HB 139
- *Assigned to Judiciary*
- *Passed Senate 26-11 on March 11; to House*
- *Not yet assigned to committee; however, second reading completed on March 14*
 - *Seven floor amendments filed, all by Democrats*
 - *Second reading complete means it is under serious consideration; however, it will be a difficult challenge to get through both chambers at this point*

SB 99 (Douglas)

Amend KRS 189.292 to define "operating a motor vehicle" and "use" or "uses"; prohibit the use of a personal communication device while operating a motor vehicle; establish exceptions; amend KRS 189.294 to prohibit persons under 18 years of age from using a personal communication device while operating a motor vehicle; amend KRS 189.990 to establish penalties for violation of KRS 189.292 and

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189.294; amend KRS 186.560 to set forth a 90-day revocation period for a violation of KRS 189.294; amend KRS 189.2327 to conform.

- Prohibits use of personal communication devices while driving
- *Assigned to Transportation*
- *Reported favorably on February 12; second reading on February 13; to Rules*
 - *Floor amendments filed by sponsor to create a 60-day operator's license revocation period for a violation of KRS 189.294; allow first-time offenders who attend and complete a driver improvement clinic within 30 days of the date of conviction to have their license reinstated early*

SB 105 (Neal)

Create new sections of KRS Chapter 237 to define "safe storage depository" and require an owner or custodian of a firearm to store the firearm in a safe storage depository or render the firearm incapable of being fired using a gun-locking device; require an owner or other person lawfully in possession of a firearm or any person who sells ammunition to report the loss or theft of the firearm or ammunition to a law enforcement agency; amend KRS 237.990 to establish penalties for violations.

- Many veterans own firearms and would be affected
- *Assigned to VMAPP*

SB 112 (Boswell)

Amend KRS 150.170 to allow a bona fide resident landowner and other authorized persons to take fish from any lake or pond located on the owner's property without procuring a sport fishing license; exempt the resident landowner and other authorized persons from certain statutory and regulatory limits, restrictions, and requirement relating to fish and fishing.

- Of interest to property owners
- *Assigned to Natural Resources & Energy*

SB 135 (Yates)

Amend KRS 217.934 to include a diagnosis of post-traumatic stress disorder as an eligible condition for hyperbaric oxygen therapy; amend KRS 217.936 to include post-traumatic stress disorder to the hyperbaric oxygen therapy written informed consent requirements.

- Adds PTSD to Traumatic Brain Injury as a qualification for HBOT therapy
- Supported by JECVO and the veterans' community
- KDVA has \$750K in annual funding already authorized (2024) to support this program upon authorization
- Per KDVA and the national Veterans Service Organizations, Hyperbaric Oxygen Therapy (HBOT) is also very successful in treating PTSD
- PTSD is very common in the veterans' community - an almost inevitable consequence of combat deployment exposure
 - Even in garrison situations, such as an airfield, all forward-deployed personnel are exposed to mortar attacks and even greater risk during transportation operations
- *Assigned to VMAPP*

SB 140 (Deneen)

Amend KRS 40.050 to include gender-neutral language (Veterans).

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- This is what is called a “mule” bill – submitted for easy access late in the session to be amended for other purposes, if needed
- *Assigned to VMAPP*

SB 141 (Deneen)

Amend KRS 36.230 to include gender-neutral language (Military Affairs).

- This is what is called a “mule” bill – submitted for easy access late in the session to be amended for other purposes, if needed
- *Assigned to VMAPP*

SB 151 (Wheeler)

Create a new section of KRS Chapter 48 to define "illegal alien"; prohibit state tax dollars appropriated by the General Assembly from being used to compensate an illegal alien; direct the Kentucky Office of Homeland Security to assist in the implementation and enforcement of the Act.

- Companion to HB 492
- Action that would be taken against supporting “illegal alien” activity in Kentucky
- *Assigned to Economic Development, Tourism, & Labor*
- *Passed committee favorably on February 20; to Senate floor, posted for passage 2-26 with second reading*
- *Passed Senate 29-4 on 2-28; to House*

SB 160 (Reed)

Amend KRS 37.170 to create the Kentucky Emergency Volunteer Corps (KEV Corps) within the Kentucky State Defense Force; create a new section of KRS Chapter 37 to detail KEV Corps eligibility, supervision, training requirements, uniform details, and prohibitions and to create the KEV Corps fund; amend KRS 39B.030 to permit the local emergency management director to use the KEV Corps during a local disaster or emergency; amend KRS 39B.050 to include the KEV Corps as a part of the local disaster and emergency services organization; amend KRS 39B.070 to permit each city, urban-county government, or charter county government the use of the KEV Corps.

- This is simply a companion bill to mirror HB 41 (Hogsdon)
- This legislation in its original form creates the Kentucky Emergency Volunteer Corps, a form of state-sponsored and state-funded militia
 - Funding will be required for uniforms, equipment, administration and management, so there is a significant fiscal element to this legislation
 - Normally, legislation with a fiscal impact is seriously considered in even-year “budget” sessions – this is a non-budget session year
 - The Adjutant General and Emergency Management would be responsible for establishment and oversight of the program under KRS Chapter 37 (Active Militia)
 - NOTE: DMA and EM are working with the sponsor to change the bill’s language away from utilizing the militia concept in KRS 37 and towards strictly using existing structure under KRS 39 (Emergency Management)
- Militias are a very different concept from the National Guard, which is a professional military force under the shared control of the nation’s Governors and Department of Defense
 - The Militia Act of 1903, also known as the “Dick Act” for the sponsor, Congressman Charles Dick, chairman of the House Militia Affairs Committee and a Major in the Ohio

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National Guard, formed the predecessor to the modern-day National Guard and required the states to divide their militias into two sections

- The law recommended the title "National Guard" for the first section, for federal administration, and "Reserve Militia" for the individual states
- Congress further authorized separate State Militias in 1956 under Title 32, Section 109
- This militia concept in HB 41 focuses solely on civic/emergency management response and has no military function
- Intent is to create a volunteer service opportunity for Kentuckians in a manner of service to the Commonwealth
 - We defer to the Adjutant General and Emergency Management as to whether there is any true "need"
- Emergency Management actions are coordinated by both the Department of Military Affairs' Division of Emergency Management and county/local emergency management agencies, with additional support available from the Kentucky National Guard in their State Active Duty (SAD) role
 - SAD missions are state-funded, with federal authorization for the National Guard to utilize applicable federally-funded (Title 32) equipment and resources
- Only 24 states maintain some form of state militia, two of which are purely ceremonial
 - In addition to military support functions, variations on militia mission include Cyber (new), Band, Training, JAG, Medical, Finance, Ceremonial, Emergency Management (new), communications
- Informational resources include the State Defense Forces website (<https://statedefenseforce.com/main/>) and the State Guard Association of the U.S. website (<https://sgaus.org/>)
- The primary question for this proposed legislation is not whether volunteer opportunities are a good thing (they certainly are), it's more about whether there is an operational need/requirement that justifies creation of a KEV Corps
- *Assigned to Appropriations & Revenue*

SB 191 (Wheeler)

Amend KRS 342.0011, relating to workers' compensation, to expand the definition of " injury" to include a diagnosis of class 2 or greater post-traumatic stress disorder from a death or threatened death by direct exposure or witnessing a death, threat of death, or its immediate aftermath; define "medical professional"; -- and much, much more, though the relevancy is that it would add PTSD as workers' comp condition.

- This bill has been sought by the first responder and military community for years; however, adding PTSD as a workers' comp condition has never been a successful effort primarily due to the potentially massive associated cost (not defined, fiscal note not yet determined)
- *Assigned to Judiciary*

SB 198 (Yates)

Create a new section of KRS Chapter 40 to impose restrictions on persons seeking to receive compensation for advising or assisting with veterans' benefits claims; provide that attorneys and law firms seeking to receive compensation shall be governed by 38 C.F.R. sec.14.636.

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- Companion bill to HB 736, except that SB 198 caps the fee charged to the veteran at three times the monthly increase in VA benefits awarded, while HB 736 caps the fee charged to the veteran at five times the monthly increase in VA benefits awarded, not to exceed \$12,500
 - Reality is these amounts are statistically insignificant in their overall impact
- This is the “Claim Shark” bill that attempts to limit the fees a paid VA claims advocate can charge a veteran the organization represents
 - In this version, the amount “shall not exceed three (3) times the one (1) month increase in benefits; and an initial or nonrefundable fee shall not be charged”
 - The bill also provides multiple common-sense restrictions to govern the proper behavior of such organizations
 - Forbids compensation for referring to another person to a paid provider
 - Requires valid written contracts when compensation is involved
 - Forbids use of call centers and aggressive tactics
 - Forbids use of secondary medical exams by a partnering physician
 - Requires a provided mandatory qualifying statement – *“This business is not sponsored by, or affiliated with, the United States Department of Veterans Affairs or the Kentucky Department of Veterans' Affairs, or any other federally chartered veterans' service organization. Other organizations, including but not limited to the Kentucky Department of Veterans' Affairs, a local veterans' service organization, and other federally chartered veterans' service organizations may be able to provide you with this service free of charge. Products or services offered by this business are not necessarily endorsed by any of these organizations. You may qualify for other veterans' benefits beyond the benefits for which you are receiving services here.”*
 - A violation of this section shall constitute an unfair, false, misleading, or deceptive act or practice in the conduct of trade or commerce under KRS 367.170
 - Paid providers remain governed by the limitations set in federal Title 38 22 C.F.R. sec. 14.63
- Veterans can receive this service for free through VSOs and KDVA; however, they are also free to retain a paid provider if that is their preference
 - The intent of this legislation is to ensure fair treatment of the veteran
- **Assigned to Senate VMAPP**
 - **Heard on February 19; referred back for drafting a Committee Substitute to address concerns cited by the veterans' community**
- **Reported favorably on 2-27 with Committee Substitute supported by JECVO that does the following:**
 - **Adds definition of consulting business**
 - **Adds accreditation requirements**
 - **Adds penalty enforcement by the Attorney General and funds raised from enforcement fees going to the “I Support Veterans” motor vehicle specialty license plate**
 - **Sets fee cap limitations at three months of increased benefits to a maximum \$11,000**
 - **SB 198 expected to take priority over HB 736**
 - **To readings and eventual Senate floor vote**
- **Second Reading on 2-28; to Rules**

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Amend KRS 39G.030 to require the executive director of the Office of Homeland Security to submit monthly reports to the Legislative Research Commission and the Interim Joint Committee on Appropriations and Revenue.

- These reports are intended to assess the Commonwealth's preparedness to respond to acts of war or terrorism, including nuclear, biological, chemical, electromagnetic pulse, agro-, eco-, or cyber-terrorism; identify the priority of needs, areas of improvement, and the overall progress made with regard to the Commonwealth's preparedness; and provide a record of all federal homeland security funding.
- *Assigned to Appropriations & Revenue*

Senate Joint Resolution (SJR) 59 (Williams)

Direct the Transportation Cabinet to designate the Kentucky National Guard Memorial Highway in Franklin County and erect appropriate signs.

- Frankfort (Franklin County) is the home of the Kentucky National Guard Memorial, outside Boone National Guard Center
- *Assigned to Transportation*

SJR 66 (Frommeyer)

Create the legislative Air Mobility and Aviation Economic Development Task Force to study innovations in aviation and advanced air mobility, actions taken by other states to support this technology, Kentucky's ability to attract aviation and aerospace-related economic development, industry trends, and actions Kentucky should take to support aviation growth and aviation-related economic development in the Commonwealth; establish membership; direct the task force to meet during the 2025 Interim and to submit findings and recommendations to the Legislative Research Commission by December 1, 2025.

- Numerous potential applications to Kentucky
 - KCMA created the Kentucky Defense and Aerospace Council through a DOD grant back in 2018/19, now managed by the Kentucky Association of Manufacturers
- Likely an unfunded mandate if passed this session, with funding left to next year or a future budget session
- *Assigned to Transportation; reported favorably with first reading 2-26, to House floor*
- *Passed Senate 33-0 on March 7; to House*

Senate Concurrent Resolution (SCR) 67 (Webb)

Direct the Legislative Research Commission to establish the Disaster Prevention and Resiliency Task Force to study disaster mitigation, infrastructure resilience, and planning for natural disasters that impact the Commonwealth; require the task force to submit its report to the Legislative Research Commission by December 1, 2025.

- Includes the Division of Emergency Management in the Kentucky Department of Military Affairs in the planning process (interestingly, though, not the Kentucky National Guard)
- *Assigned to VMAPP*
- *Passed Senate 38-0 on March 6 with Committee Substitute and Floor Amendment adding additional roles and members, including the Adjutant General of Kentucky; to House*

SJR 70 (Herron)

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Direct the Legislative Research Commission to establish the Gun Violence Prevention Task Force to study the causes of and examine ways to prevent gun violence; establish task force membership; require the task force to meet at least once per month during the 2025 Interim; require the task force to submit its findings and recommendations to the Legislative Research Commission by December 1, 2025.

- Subject of interest to many veterans, though no specific veteran or military organization participation is added
- *Assigned to VMAPP*

SJR 72 (Smith)

Direct the Kentucky Office of the Attorney General to create a Threat Response and Accountability Task Force to determine the chain of command and accountability matrix for a critical incident; establish task force membership; require the task force to submit a report to the Legislative Research Commission by January 1, 2026; EMERGENCY.

- Includes, among many agencies, the Kentucky Department of Military Affairs (National Guard) and its Division of Emergency Management, and the Kentucky Office of Homeland Security's Intelligence Fusion Center
Likely an unfunded mandate if passed this session, with funding left to next year or a future budget session
- *Assigned to VMAPP*

END