

# Healthy Families, Healthy Communities



## Veterans

*We endeavored this year to do the right thing, in terms of respecting men and women who put their lives on hold -- and in some cases, put their lives on the line. House Democrats advanced measures recognizing that, whether veterans are engaged in a business enterprise, going to college, or pursuing some other endeavor, they have earned solid support in the laws of our state.*

### **Protecting our Veterans**

**Strengthening economic protections for veterans and military personnel / [HB 2171](#)** – Recognizing that a service member whose active duty orders are signed by the governor has fewer protections than one whose orders are signed by the President, legislators teamed up with Attorney General Ferguson to right this wrong. This legislation ensures that our troops carry out their jobs without having to worry about their cars being repossessed, their homes foreclosed on or their families evicted while they are making great personal sacrifices for our nation. This bill strengthens Washington’s Service Members’ Civil Relief Act (SCRA) by ensuring all military personnel can enforce their rights under the SCRA, making those protections equal to the ones in federal law, and authorizing the Attorney General to investigate SCRA violations. *(Delivered to Governor)*

### **More veteran-owned businesses contracting with state agencies**

**Modifying certain provisions governing veteran-owned businesses / [HB 2744](#)** - The Department of Veterans Affairs is required to maintain a current list of certified veteran-owned business on the department’s website for the public to access. The legislation also requires such businesses to be located in Washington, or whose business is primarily conducted in the state. *(Delivered to Governor)*

### **Crediting military experience**

**Awards academic credit for military training/ [HB 1858/SB 5969](#)** –Public colleges and universities are required to adopt a policy concerning the awarding of academic credit for military training courses or programs. The military training would have to be applicable to the student’s certificate or degree program. The institutions are also required to provide a copy of the policy to any applicant listing prior or current military services on their applications. *(Delivered to Governor)*

### **Ensuring access for our heroes in uniform**

**Granting residency status to veterans and active military for in-state tuition purposes / [HB 1011/SB 5318](#)** This bill expands opportunities for members of the military and their spouses and dependents to attend public colleges in Washington and pay resident tuition. Active duty personnel, members of the National Guard, their spouses, and dependents must meet certain conditions in order to qualify. The opportunity is available if the person was a Washington resident when entering service, or if the person intends to become a Washington resident when discharged. *(Delivered to Governor)*



Photo courtesy of USAMilitary.com

### ***Easing the path to professional licensing for our veterans***

***Evaluating military training and experience toward meeting licensing requirements / [HB 1859](#)*** – Allows the state to recognize specific training or education received in the military, and apply it toward the experience requirements for a professional license. This experience could help veterans more quickly receive licenses in engineering, architecture, land surveyor, real estate appraiser, private investigator, notary, driver training and many other specified professions licensed by the State Department of Licensing. *(Died in Senate)*

### ***Transitioning from military to civilian life***

***Veterans Innovations Program / [HB 2130](#)*** - This legislation streamlines the internal administration of Veterans Innovations Program (VIP) which will allow for more efficient service for veterans. The VIP helps veterans, particularly veterans transitioning from combat to civilian life, when other sources of assistance aren't available. The VIP also gives Department of Veterans Affairs flexibility in determining assistance for veterans, such as employment, travel, family-related services, and other emergency needs. *(Delivered to Governor)*