



**House Military and Veterans Affairs Reported
Substitute for HB153**

A BILL

TO BE ENTITLED

AN ACT

To establish the Alabama Veterans Resource Center Act;
to create and designate the Alabama Veterans Resource Center
as a public corporation; to provide for the membership of a
board of directors for the center; to provide for the duties
and powers of the board in managing the center; and to
authorize the center to enter into public-private
partnerships.

BE IT ENACTED BY THE LEGISLATURE OF ALABAMA:

Section 1. This act shall be known and cited as the
Alabama Veterans Resource Center Act.

Section 2. The Legislature finds and declares all of
the following:

(1) Alabama has the highest per capita veteran
population in the United States.

(2) Veterans face unique challenges when moving from
military service to civilian life including, but not limited
to, accessing benefits, finding employment, and addressing
mental health needs.

(3) A comprehensive, coordinated system of support is
essential to veterans and their families.



House Military and Veterans Affairs Reported Substitute for HB153

(4) Public-private partnerships can leverage resources and expertise to effectively serve veterans.

Section 3. (a) The Governor, the Speaker of the House of Representatives, and the President Pro Tempore of the Senate shall present to the Secretary of State an application, signed by each of them, for the formation of the Alabama Veterans Resource Center as a public corporation, having a legal existence separate and apart from the state and any county, municipality, or political subdivision, which shall set forth all of the following:

(1) The name, official designation, and official office location of each of the applicants, together with a certified copy of the commission evidencing each applicant's right to office.

(2) The date on which each applicant was sworn into office and the term of office of each applicant.

(3) The name of the proposed public corporation, which shall be the Alabama Veterans Resource Center.

(4) The location of the principal office of the proposed corporation.

(5) Any other matter relating to the corporation that the applicants may choose to insert and that is not inconsistent with this act or state law.

(b) The application shall be subscribed and sworn to by each applicant before an officer authorized by the laws of the state to take acknowledgments to deeds. The Secretary of State shall examine the application, and, if he or she finds that the application substantially complies with the requirements



**House Military and Veterans Affairs Reported
Substitute for HB153**

of this section, the application shall be filed and recorded in an appropriate book of records in the office of the Secretary of State.

(c) When the application has been made, filed, and recorded as provided in subsection (b), the applicants shall constitute a public corporation under the name stated in the application, and the Secretary of State shall make and issue to the applicants a certificate of incorporation pursuant to this act, under the Great Seal of the State, and shall record the certificate with the application. There shall be no fees paid to the Secretary of State in connection with the corporation.

(d) Notwithstanding any provision of law to the contrary, the corporation incorporated pursuant to this section shall not be deemed to be a part of the state for any purpose but shall be treated as a public corporation and body politic separate and apart from the state.

Section 4. (a) The center shall be under the management and control of a board of directors, and all power necessary or appropriate for the management and control of the center shall be vested solely in that board.

(b) The board shall have all of the following members:

(1) Two members appointed by the Governor.

(2) One member appointed by the Speaker of the House of Representatives.

(3) One member appointed by the Lieutenant Governor in his or her role as Chair of the Alabama Military Stability Commission.



House Military and Veterans Affairs Reported Substitute for HB153

(4) One member appointed by the President Pro Tempore of the Senate.

(5) The Commissioner of the State Department of Veterans Affairs, who shall serve as an ex officio member and vice chair of the board.

(6) The Commissioner of the Department of Mental Health, who shall serve as an ex officio member.

(7) The Secretary of the Alabama Department of Workforce, who shall serve as an ex officio member and chair of the board.

(c) All board members are voting members of the board and shall be considered in determining whether a quorum is present.

(d)(1) Each ex officio member may designate an individual to serve in his or her place at any meeting of the board or may designate an individual to serve in his or her place at all meetings of the board until the expiration of his or her term. An ex officio member may withdraw his or her designation at any time.

(2) A designee shall be counted for purposes of both establishing a quorum and voting.

(3) An ex officio member shall continue to serve on the board as long as he or she holds the position that authorizes his or her service on the board.

(e) In making appointments, the appointing authorities shall coordinate their appointments to assure the board membership is inclusive and reflects the racial, gender, geographic, urban, rural, and economic diversity of the state.



**House Military and Veterans Affairs Reported
Substitute for HB153**

(f) (1) Each appointed member shall serve a term of two years following his or her date of appointment.

(2) Each appointed member shall continue to serve until he or she is reappointed or a successor is appointed to his or her place on the board.

(3) An appointed member may only serve a maximum of two consecutive terms of office and may be reappointed after not serving for a period of at least two years.

(4) An appointed member may be removed by his or her appointing authority at any time and for any reason. Upon removal, the respective appointing authority shall appoint a successor to serve for the unexpired term.

(5) An individual appointed to fill a vacancy, for any reason, shall serve the remainder of the unexpired term and may be reappointed to serve an additional term.

(g) No board member shall receive compensation because of his or her service as a member. Each member may be reimbursed for actual and reasonable travel expenses incurred in the performance of his or her duties as a member.

(h) A majority of the board members shall constitute a quorum for the transaction of business by the board, and decisions shall be made on the basis of a majority of the quorum then present and voting. No vacancy in the membership of the board or the voluntary disqualification or abstention of any member shall impair the right of a quorum to exercise all of the powers and duties of the board.

(i) Members of the board may participate in meetings of the board in person, by means of telephone conference, video



**House Military and Veterans Affairs Reported
Substitute for HB153**

conference, or other similar communications equipment, so that all individuals participating in the meeting may hear each other at the same time. Participation by any such means shall constitute presence in person at a meeting for all purposes, including for purposes of establishing a quorum.

(j) The board may appoint other officers to perform duties not inconsistent with this act or applicable law, as the board deems necessary or appropriate.

(k) In addition to regular meetings of the board, as may be provided by law or bylaws adopted by the board, special meetings of the board may be called by the chair acting alone or by any three other board members acting in concert, in each case upon notice to each board member given in person, by email, by registered letter, or by other means. Notice to each board member may be waived upon the unanimous written consent of all board members, either before or after the meeting with respect to which the notice would otherwise be required.

Section 5. (a) The board shall have all of the powers necessary to carry out and effectuate the purposes of this act. Without limiting the generality of the foregoing, the board shall have and exercise all of the following powers:

(1) Provide comprehensive support services to veterans and their families residing in this state including, but not limited to, all of the following:

a. Assistance with accessing federal and state benefits.

b. Career counseling and job placement services.

c. Mental health and wellness programs.



House Military and Veterans Affairs Reported Substitute for HB153

d. Education and training opportunities.

e. Support for military spouses, dependents, and families.

(2) Develop, monitor, implement, and update as necessary the strategic plan and strategies for the center.

(3) Oversee the operations and finances of the center.

(4) Employ an executive director or other employees, or both, to manage the day-to-day operations of the center.

(5) Establish committees as necessary.

(6) Develop and implement a hub and spoke model for the center, with a central office providing core services and a network of regional offices offering localized support and access points through a public private-partnership. The center may also utilize an online portal and other physical structures or technology to conduct its operations.

(7) Adopt, alter, and repeal bylaws as necessary for the regulation and conduct of the affairs and business of the center, and for the implementation of this act.

(8) Make and enter into contracts, leases, and agreements and take other actions as the board determines necessary or desirable to accomplish the purposes of this act and the center and exercise any power necessary for the accomplishment of the purposes of the center or incidental to the powers expressly provided by this act.

(9) Appoint, employ, and contract with employees, agents, advisors, consultants, and service providers including, but not limited to, attorneys, accountants, financial experts, and other advisors, consultants, and agents



**House Military and Veterans Affairs Reported
Substitute for HB153**

as the board determines necessary or desirable to accomplish any purpose of the center or incidental to the powers expressly provided by this act, and to fix the compensation of those individuals.

(10) Manage, invest, and expend funds at its disposal.

(11) Grant monies and things of value in aid of or to, any individual, firm, corporation, or other business entity, public or private, as the board determines necessary or desirable to accomplish any purpose of the center or incidental to the powers expressly provided by this act.

(12) Take any action necessary to exercise its rights or fulfill its obligations relevant to the center under state law.

(13) All other powers necessary to carry out and effectuate the purposes of this act. These powers shall be construed broadly, so that the failure to state a power of the board shall not be considered a limitation upon the board, as long as the board determines the power is necessary to allow the board to fulfill the purpose of the center, as provided by this act.

(b) The board may make, enter into, and execute contracts, agreements, and other instruments with, accept appropriations, loans, gifts, aid, and grants from, and cooperate with, any other individual or entity including, but not limited to, all of the following:

(1) The United States of America, the state, or any agency, instrumentality, or political subdivision of either.

(2) For profit and nonprofit private entities.



**House Military and Veterans Affairs Reported
Substitute for HB153**

(3) Public bodies, departments, or authorities including, but not limited to, any entity in the Executive Branch of the state, to act on behalf of the board in carrying out functions that the board determines are consistent with this act and the powers of the center.

(c)(1) Members of the board shall be subject to the state ethics laws under Chapter 25 of Title 36, Code of Alabama 1975, but members of the board shall not be required to submit a statement of economic interests under Section 36-25-14, Code of Alabama 1975. The center is not a business for purposes of the state ethics laws, Chapter 25 of Title 36, Code of Alabama 1975, and a public official or public employee holding a position on the board is not precluded from taking official actions affecting the center as long as there is no impermissible personal gain.

(2) The board is subject to the Alabama Open Meetings Act under Chapter 25A of Title 36, Code of Alabama 1975.

Section 6. (a) The board may enter into contracts, leases, agreements, investments, and may otherwise expend monies without compliance with competitive bid laws under Article 5, commencing with Section 41-4-110, of Chapter 4 of Title 41, Code of Alabama 1975, and Chapter 2 of Title 39, Code of Alabama 1975.

(b) Solely as a result of entering into contracts, leases, agreements, investments, or otherwise as provided in subsection (a), no for-profit or nonprofit private entity, nor the officers, employees, agents, or directors of any of the foregoing, shall become subject to state ethics laws or the



**House Military and Veterans Affairs Reported
Substitute for HB153**

Alabama Open Meetings Act under Chapter 25 and Chapter 25A of Title 36, Code of Alabama 1975; competitive bid laws under Article 5, commencing with Section 41-4-110, of Chapter 4 of Title 41, Code of Alabama 1975; Chapter 2 of Title 39, Code of Alabama 1975; or public records laws under Article 3, commencing with Section 36-12-40, of Chapter 12 of Title 36, Code of Alabama 1975.

Section 7. In addition to the powers provided in Section 5, the board may enter into annual public-private partnerships with nonprofit organizations and other entities to leverage resources and expertise in support of the center's mission and purpose. Each public-private partnership is subject to annual renewal by the board.

Section 8. (a) The Alabama Veterans Resource Center Fund is created in the State Treasury. All monies received by the board pursuant to this act or otherwise from any source permitted by this act shall be deposited into the State Treasury to the credit of the fund. Amounts deposited into the fund shall be budgeted and allotted in accordance with Sections 41-4-80 through 41-4-96 and Sections 41-19-1 through 41-19-12, Code of Alabama 1975.

(b) The center may accept additional funding from public and private sources, including appropriations, loans, federal gifts, grants, corporate sponsorships, and individual donations.

Section 9. The board, at any time and by majority vote, may cause its application for formation to be amended by having three members of its board of directors file an



**House Military and Veterans Affairs Reported
Substitute for HB153**

amendment with the Secretary of State, which shall be sworn to by each signatory thereto before an officer authorized to take acknowledgments to deeds.

Section 10. (a) The board, at any time and by a three-quarters vote, may dissolve the center by having three-quarters of the members of the board file with the Secretary of State an application for dissolution, which shall be sworn to by each signatory thereto by an officer authorized to take acknowledgments to deeds.

(b) Upon the filing of the application for dissolution, the center shall cease to exist. The Secretary of State shall file and record the application for dissolution, and shall make and issue, under the Great Seal of the State, a certificate that the center is dissolved, and shall record the certificate with the application for dissolution. Title to all property held in the name of the center shall be vested in the state upon dissolution of the center, and the ex officio board members, by written consent, shall direct how to dispose of any monies in the Alabama Veterans Resource Center Fund.

Section 11. This act shall be liberally construed to effectuate its purposes.

Section 12. This act shall become effective on June 1, 2025.