

SB67 ENGROSSED



1 SB67
2 SLJ9257-2
3 By Senators Jones, Chesteen
4 RFD: Veterans and Military Affairs
5 First Read: 04-Feb-25



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A BILL
TO BE ENTITLED
AN ACT

Relating to veterans affairs; to amend Sections 31-5-2, 31-5-3, 31-5-5, 31-5-6, 31-5-7, 31-5-8, 31-5-9, 31-5-10, 31-5-13, 31-5A-3, 31-5A-4, 31-5A-5, 31-5A-6, 31-5A-7, 31-5A-8, 31-5A-9, and 31-5A-10, Code of Alabama 1975, as last amended by Act 2024-442 of the 2024 Regular Session; to require the Governor, rather than the State Board of Veterans Affairs, to appoint the Commissioner of the State Department of Veterans Affairs to serve at the Governor's pleasure; to provide that the board serves in an oversight capacity; and to transfer certain duties from the board to the State Department of Veterans Affairs.

BE IT ENACTED BY THE LEGISLATURE OF ALABAMA:

Section 1. Sections 31-5-2, 31-5-3, 31-5-5, 31-5-6, 31-5-7, 31-5-8, 31-5-9, 31-5-10, and 31-5-13, Code of Alabama 1975, as last amended by Act 2024-442 of the 2024 Regular Session, are amended to read as follows:

"§31-5-2

The State Board of Veterans Affairs is established to oversee the State Department of Veterans Affairs. The department shall be composed of a commissioner and other



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29 officers and employees authorized to be appointed under this
30 chapter who meet the qualifications prescribed by the ~~board~~
31 commissioner. "

32 "§31-5-3

33 (a) (1) The board shall be composed of the Governor, as
34 chair, and representatives, to serve for a term of four years
35 from the date of their respective appointments, who shall be
36 selected from the memberships of the Alabama Department of the
37 American Legion, the Veterans of Foreign Wars, the Disabled
38 American Veterans, the Vietnam Veterans of America, AMVETS,
39 the Military Order of the Purple Heart, the American
40 Ex-Prisoners of War, Incorporated, the Alabama Alliance of the
41 Military Officers Association of America, Incorporated, and
42 the Marine Corps League.

43 (2) The nomination of the representatives shall be made
44 by the executive committees or similar governing bodies of the
45 respective organizations. There shall be one representative
46 from each of the organizations for the first 7,500 resident
47 members, or fraction thereof, and one additional
48 representative from each organization for each additional
49 7,500 resident members, or fraction thereof. The total
50 memberships of the respective organizations shall be
51 determined on July 1 of the year in which the representatives
52 shall be designated from the state enrollment of each
53 organization as duly verified for correctness by the adjutant
54 or a similar officer of the organization. Notwithstanding the
55 foregoing, the executive committees or similar governing
56 bodies of the organizations shall each nominate to the



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57 Governor three veterans who are members of the organizations
58 for each place on the board to which the organizations are
59 entitled to have a nominee. The nominations shall also
60 include, in representative proportions, veterans of every war
61 which are included in the membership of the organizations.

62 (3) Notwithstanding subdivisions (1) and (2), if (i) a
63 vacancy occurs before the end of a term, (ii) an organization
64 fails to nominate to the Governor a list of nominees within 90
65 days after a term ends, or (iii) the membership of any
66 organization decreases below 500 members, the Governor may
67 appoint a veteran of his or her choosing in a manner that
68 conforms with subdivision (4).

69 ~~(3)~~ (4) Appointments to the board shall be
70 representative of the entirety of the state's veteran
71 community. Board members shall include veterans from various
72 branches of the Armed Forces of the United States and service
73 eras (including active-duty service members, so long as
74 permitted under federal law) and consist of both members and
75 nonmembers of veteran service organizations. Board members
76 should also represent entities that provide meaningful
77 services to veterans and their families. The appointing
78 authorities shall coordinate their appointments to assure that
79 the membership of the board is inclusive and reflects the
80 racial, gender, geographic, urban, rural, and economic
81 diversity of the ~~state~~ state's veteran community.

82 (5) A member may not serve more than two consecutive
83 terms.

84 (6) Within 60 days of the act adding this amendatory



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85 language, an organization may nominate a new slate of names
86 from which the Governor shall appoint a new member to fill the
87 remainder of the respective term.

88 ~~(b) The board, in conference with the commissioner,~~
89 ~~shall adopt and amend policies and rules as may be necessary~~
90 ~~to carry out this chapter shall serve in an oversight capacity~~
91 and shall do all of the following:

92 (1) Advise the commissioner on veterans' matters that
93 are within the scope of the authority of the department.

94 (2) Develop policy recommendations for the state as it
95 relates to veterans and veterans' affairs.

96 (3) Recommend initiatives to assist the well-being of
97 veterans and veterans' families.

98 (4) Assist the commissioner and department as needed
99 and as otherwise provided in this chapter.

100 ~~(c) The board, subject to Section 31-5-6, shall adopt~~
101 ~~rules governing the manner of performance of all functions and~~
102 ~~duties of the department and the various officers and~~
103 ~~employees, including the selection and appointment of all~~
104 ~~commissioners and assistant commissioners, district managers,~~
105 ~~and veteran service officers. The rules shall have the force~~
106 ~~and effect of law and prima facie evidence thereof may be~~
107 ~~given in all courts and proceedings by the production of what~~
108 ~~purports to be an official printed copy of the regulations,~~
109 ~~alterations, repeal, or amendment.~~

110 ~~(d) The board may establish and operate through the~~
111 ~~department state veterans cemeteries and may apply to the~~
112 ~~government of the United States, or any subdivision, agency,~~



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113 ~~or instrumentality thereof, for funds for the purpose of~~
114 ~~establishing, operating, and maintaining the cemeteries. The~~
115 ~~department may enter into agreements with any subdivision of~~
116 ~~the state for assistance in operating the cemeteries. The~~
117 ~~department shall own the land on which the cemeteries are~~
118 ~~located. The department may accept federal grant funds,~~
119 ~~funding from state subdivisions, donations from private~~
120 ~~sources, and federal plot allowance payments. All of these~~
121 ~~funds shall be deposited into the Veterans Assistance Fund and~~
122 ~~may be used only for the establishment, operation, and~~
123 ~~maintenance of veterans cemeteries. The department may accept~~
124 ~~suitable cemetery land, in accordance with federal veterans~~
125 ~~cemetery grant guidelines, from the federal government, state~~
126 ~~government, state subdivisions, private sources, and any other~~
127 ~~source wishing to transfer land for use as a veterans~~
128 ~~cemetery. No funds used for these projects may be from the~~
129 ~~Education Trust Fund. The commissioner may execute deeds and~~
130 ~~other instruments of conveyance for the department. Any deed~~
131 ~~of cemetery property to the department prior to August 1,~~
132 ~~2012, is ratified and confirmed.~~

133 ~~(e)~~ (c) The board shall hold meetings at times and
134 locations to be determined by rules of the ~~board~~ department or
135 as designated by the chair.

136 ~~(f)~~ (d) The presence of a majority of the members at any
137 regular or special meeting of the board shall constitute a
138 quorum for the transaction of all business.

139 ~~(g)~~ (e) Members of the board shall be entitled to a per
140 diem, to be fixed by the ~~board~~ commissioner, and their



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141 traveling and other necessary expenses actually incurred while
142 attending meetings of the board or on the business of the
143 department."

144 "§31-5-5

145 (a) (1) The department shall adopt rules governing the
146 manner of performance of all functions and duties of the
147 department and the various officers and employees, including
148 the selection and appointment of all assistant commissioners,
149 district managers, and veteran service officers.

150 (2) The department may adopt other rules as necessary
151 to implement this chapter.

152 (3) On the effective date of this act, all rules
153 previously adopted by the board shall be considered rules of
154 the department until such time the department amends or
155 repeals the rules.

156 (b) The department, in consultation with the board, shall
157 establish and operate state veterans cemeteries and may apply
158 to the government of the United States, or any subdivision,
159 agency, or instrumentality thereof, for funds for the purpose
160 of establishing, operating, and maintaining the cemeteries.
161 The department may enter into agreements with any subdivision
162 of the state for assistance in operating the cemeteries. The
163 department shall own the land on which the cemeteries are
164 located. The department may accept federal grant funds,
165 funding from state subdivisions, donations from private
166 sources, and federal plot allowance payments. All of these
167 funds shall be deposited into the Veterans Assistance Fund and
168 may be used only for the establishment, operation, and



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169 maintenance of veterans cemeteries. The department may accept
170 suitable cemetery land, in accordance with federal veterans
171 cemetery grant guidelines, from the federal government, state
172 government, state subdivisions, private sources, and any other
173 source wishing to transfer land for use as a veterans
174 cemetery. No funds used for these projects may be from the
175 Education Trust Fund. The commissioner may execute deeds and
176 other instruments of conveyance for the department. Any deed
177 of cemetery property to the department prior to August 1,
178 2012, is ratified and confirmed.

179 (c) The department, through the commissioner,~~with the~~
180 ~~approval of~~ and in consultation with the board, may contract
181 with any organization of veterans which, for a period of five
182 years next preceding the date of the contract, has maintained
183 an established committee or agency rendering services to
184 veterans, similar to the services referred to in Section
185 31-5-4, to perform the services for veterans and to process
186 any claims or matters of veterans who apply to the department
187 for assistance when the veterans have executed a power of
188 attorney to the veterans' organization. The department,
189 through the contract, shall compensate the veterans'
190 organizations on the basis of service rendered, which
191 compensation shall be paid from sums appropriated to the
192 department. No contract shall be made unless the ~~board~~
193 commissioner determines, owing to the confidential
194 relationships involved and the necessity of operating through
195 agencies which the veterans involved will feel to be
196 sympathetic towards their problems, that the services cannot



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197 satisfactorily be rendered other than through the agency of
198 the veterans' organization and that the best interests of the
199 veterans involved will be served if the contract is made. "

200 "§31-5-6

201 (a) ~~The board~~ Governor shall appoint a commissioner to
202 ~~serve for a term of four years subject to removal by the board~~
203 ~~for cause~~ at the Governor's pleasure. The commissioner shall
204 be appointed on the basis of education, ability, and
205 experience in handling veterans' affairs, and without regard
206 to political affiliations. The commissioner shall be a
207 resident of this state, shall be a veteran who served on
208 active duty for a period of 60 days or more in the Armed
209 Forces of the United States and shall have been honorably
210 discharged. The commissioner's salary shall be set by Governor
211 and shall not be subject to Section 36-6-6.

212 (b) The commissioner shall be the executive and
213 administrative officer of the department, ~~subject to the~~
214 ~~authority of the board~~, and may issue administrative orders
215 and directives to all officials and employees in the
216 department.

217 (c) The department, acting through the commissioner,
218 shall be the designated agency of this state to represent the
219 state and its veterans before the United States Department of
220 Veterans Affairs or any other agency dealing with the
221 interests of veterans.

222 (d) The commissioner, ~~with the approval of~~ in
223 consultation with the board, may enter into reciprocal
224 agreements with other states to render services in this state



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225 to veterans who are nonresidents.

226 (e) The commissioner, ~~with the approval of the board,~~
227 shall appoint all assistant commissioners, district managers,
228 and veteran service officers as provided in this chapter, fix
229 salaries, and establish minimum standards of service. This
230 power shall be without regard to any limitation established by
231 law, unless any law passed hereafter shall refer specifically
232 to a particular officer or employee of the department.

233 (f) The ~~commissioner~~ commissioner shall appoint all
234 personnel in the department as authorized or may be authorized
235 in the future under the state Merit System and approved by the
236 State Personnel Board.

237 (g) The commissioner, ~~with the approval of the board,~~
238 may engage in activities designed to educate, recognize, and
239 promote the mission of the board to veterans, the public,
240 potential applicants, and other public agencies and, in doing
241 so, may incur marketing expenditures for educational,
242 informational, and promotional items to be used to further its
243 purposes ~~as determined by the board."~~

244 "§31-5-7

245 (a) The commissioner shall submit an annual budget to
246 the board ~~for its approval~~ of all funds appropriated by the
247 Legislature to the department for the specific purposes for
248 which they are appropriated and also a budget of any federal
249 funds that may be allotted to the state by the federal
250 government for the purposes of the department according to the
251 regulations of the federal authorities. The commissioner shall
252 publish annually a full report of the operations and



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253 administration of the department, ~~together with~~
254 ~~recommendations and suggestions,~~ and submit the report to the
255 board.

256 (b) The commissioner shall do all of the following:

257 (1) Prepare detailed plans for, and fully develop, a
258 comprehensive statewide veterans assistance program.

259 (2) Cooperate with all other heads of the state
260 departments in coordinating the plans and programs of state
261 agencies that may properly be utilized in the administration
262 of various aspects of the ~~problems of~~ challenges faced by
263 veterans and dependents of veterans, ~~such as the office of the~~
264 ~~State Adjutant General, the State Department of Education, the~~
265 ~~State Department of Human Resources, the state Department of~~
266 ~~Workforce, and any other state agencies furnishing services to~~
267 ~~veterans.~~

268 (3) Provide a central contact between federal agencies
269 dealing with the ~~problems of veterans, to include the United~~
270 ~~States Department of Veterans Affairs, the Selective Service~~
271 ~~System, the Social Security Administration, the Department of~~
272 ~~Defense, and other federal agencies and state agencies that~~
273 ~~may administer~~ administration of veterans' services and
274 benefits.

275 (4) Maintain central case records of all veterans
276 seeking services or benefits to create a clearinghouse of
277 information and facilitate the interchange of information and
278 case histories among state administrative agencies and the
279 federal agencies.

280 (5) Become acquainted, and acquaint department



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281 associates and employees, with the federal, state, and local
282 laws enacted for the benefit of members of the armed forces,
283 veterans, and their families and dependents.

284 (6) Collect data and information about available
285 facilities and services and cooperate with information or
286 service agencies throughout the state to inform members of the
287 armed forces, veterans, their families and dependents, and
288 military and civil authorities regarding the existence or
289 availability of all of the following:

290 a. Educational training and retraining facilities.

291 b. Health, medical, rehabilitation, and housing
292 services and facilities.

293 c. Employment and reemployment services.

294 d. Provisions of federal, state, and local laws
295 affording rights, privileges, and benefits to members of the
296 armed forces, veterans, and their families and dependents.

297 e. Other matters of similar, relative, or appropriate
298 natures.

299 (7) Assist all resident veterans and their relatives,
300 beneficiaries, and dependents in receiving from the United
301 States and this state all compensation, pensions,
302 hospitalization, insurance, education, employment, loan
303 guarantees, or any other aid or benefit to which they may be
304 or may become entitled under existing laws of the United
305 States or of this state ~~and perform other related duties~~
306 ~~assigned by the board.~~

307 (8) Cooperate and negotiate with the federal government
308 and all national, state, and local governmental or private



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309 agencies to secure additional services or benefits for
310 veterans, their families, and their dependents who are
311 residents of this state."

312 "§31-5-8

313 The commissioner, ~~with the approval of the board,~~ may
314 appoint additional assistant commissioners to serve as
315 employees in the department, subject to the rules of the ~~board~~
316 department. Assistant commissioners shall be appointed on the
317 basis of education, ability, and experience in handling
318 veterans' affairs, and without regard to political
319 affiliations. The appointees shall be residents of this state,
320 shall be veterans who served on active duty for a period of 60
321 days or more in the Armed Forces of the United States, and
322 shall have been honorably discharged. "

323 "§31-5-9

324 (a) Except as provided in subsection (b), the
325 commissioner, ~~with the approval of the board,~~ shall appoint a
326 veteran service officer for each county in the state. Each
327 veteran service officer shall be an employee of the department
328 and subject to the rules of the ~~board~~ department. The veteran
329 service officer shall be a resident of this state, a qualified
330 elector therein, shall be a veteran who served on active duty
331 for a period of 60 days or more in the Armed Forces of the
332 United States, and shall have been honorably discharged. In
333 making appointments, consideration shall be given to whether
334 the applicants are residents of the county. The commissioner
335 ~~and board~~ shall economize as far as possible in the
336 administration of this section.



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337 (b) (1) The commissioner, ~~with the approval of the~~
338 ~~board,~~ shall determine whether there is a need for a veteran
339 service officer in any particular county. In making this
340 determination, the commissioner ~~and the board~~ shall consider
341 the total population of the county, the number of men and
342 women inducted into the armed services from the county, the
343 number of veterans present in the county, and special
344 circumstances and facts involving the concentration of
345 industries or other problems that may increase or decrease the
346 number of veterans in certain localities.

347 (2) Where the circumstances do not justify establishing
348 a separate office in each county, the commissioner, ~~with the~~
349 ~~approval of the board,~~ shall establish service areas in the
350 state containing one or more counties and shall establish a
351 service office for each service area in a location most
352 advantageous to the veterans within each area.

353 (c) The commissioner, ~~with the approval of the board,~~
354 shall establish districts within the state containing one or
355 more counties or service areas, and shall appoint district
356 managers to manage or assist veteran service officers.
357 District managers appointed under this section shall be
358 selected in the same manner and possess the same
359 qualifications as veteran service officers."

360 "§31-5-10

361 (a) Each veteran service officer and district manager
362 shall perform the duties prescribed by policies, rules, and
363 instructions adopted by the ~~board~~ department and shall be
364 administratively responsible to the commissioner.



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365 (b) Each veteran service officer and district manager
366 shall do all of the following:

367 (1) Cooperate with and assist local veteran service
368 organizations in developing assistance programs for veterans.

369 (2) Furnish information and data to the commissioner
370 relative to various aspects of the issues of veterans and
371 dependents of veterans.

372 (3) Provide an information and referral service to
373 veterans seeking aid and assistance in connection with matters
374 pertaining to employment and reemployment, educational and
375 vocational training, health, medical, rehabilitation, and
376 housing services and facilities, emergency financial
377 assistance, and other matters as appropriate.

378 (4) Cooperate with all national, state, and local
379 governmental and private agencies offering services or any
380 benefits to veterans and their families and dependents.

381 (5) Assist all resident veterans and their relatives,
382 beneficiaries, and dependents in receiving from the United
383 States and this state all compensation, pension,
384 hospitalization, insurance, education, employment, loan
385 guarantees, or other aid or benefit to which they may be
386 entitled under existing federal law or laws of this state, or
387 which may be created, and perform all other related duties
388 assigned by the ~~board~~ commissioner.

389 (6) Seek out and advise veterans of their rights and
390 benefits under federal and state laws, encourage the use of
391 educational opportunities, including trade and vocational
392 training, and offer counsel to widows, orphans, and



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393 beneficiaries in order to secure the fullest extent of
394 available benefits."

395 "§31-5-13

396 The department and the commissioner shall maintain
397 offices in the capital city of the state. The commissioner,
398 ~~under authority of the board,~~ in addition to any service
399 office, if deemed necessary, may set up and maintain a service
400 office staffed by an assistant commissioner, veteran service
401 officer, or district manager, with sufficient clerical
402 assistance. "

403 Section 2. Sections 31-5A-3, 31-5A-4, 31-5A-5, 31-5A-6,
404 31-5A-7, 31-5A-8, 31-5A-9, and 31-5A-10, Code of Alabama 1975,
405 as last amended by Act 2024-442 of the 2024 Regular Session,
406 are amended to read as follows:

407 "§31-5A-3

408 The department is the sole agency authorized to receive
409 federal aid from the United States Department of Veterans
410 Affairs or any other agency of the United States government
411 authorized to pay federal aid to states for state homes under
412 38 U.S.C. §§ 1741 and 1742, as amended, and from any other
413 federal law or act of Congress providing for the payment of
414 funds to states for the care of or support of disabled
415 veterans in state homes. The department may receive from any
416 source gifts, contributions, bequests, and individual
417 reimbursements, the receipt of which does not exclude any
418 other source of revenue. All funds received by the department
419 shall be deposited in the State Treasury in the Alabama
420 Veterans Home Trust Fund as established in Section 31-5A-7,



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421 and the funds shall be expended as authorized by the ~~board~~
422 commissioner. "

423 "§31-5A-4

424 The department shall contract with a non-governmental
425 entity to operate state veterans homes for the care and
426 support of elderly or disabled veterans in this state.
427 Contracts for the procurement of services required to manage,
428 administer, and operate a state veterans home shall be awarded
429 on a competitive basis through the solicitation of proposals.
430 The contract may be awarded to the vendor whose proposal is
431 most advantageous to the state, taking into consideration cost
432 factors, program suitability factors, management plan,
433 excellence of program design, key personnel, corporate or
434 company resources, financial condition of the vendor,
435 corporate experience and past performance, and any other
436 requirements deemed necessary by the ~~board~~ department and
437 expressed in its solicitation for proposals. Any contract
438 awarded under this section shall be for a period not to exceed
439 five years. The ~~board~~ department is not required to select the
440 vendor offering the lowest cost proposal but shall select the
441 vendor who, in the ~~board's~~ department's discretion, offers the
442 proposal most advantageous to this state. The award of
443 contracts described in this section are exempt from the
444 requirements of Chapter 16 and Chapter 4 of Title 41. "

445 "§31-5A-5

446 The commissioner, ~~subject to the approval of the board,~~
447 shall appoint an executive director for oversight and
448 coordination of all state veterans homes and shall also



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449 appoint an on-site director for each state veterans home. The
450 executive director and on-site director positions created
451 pursuant to this section shall be exempt status, and shall be
452 subject to guidelines established by the ~~board~~ department.
453 Each director shall be appointed on the basis of education,
454 ability, and experience in the administration of medical
455 facilities or nursing homes, without regard to political
456 affiliations. Each director shall perform his or her duties in
457 accordance with the rules, guidelines, and general policies
458 established by the ~~board~~ department and as provided in this
459 chapter. "

460 "§31-5A-6

461 ~~The board, in conference with the commissioner, in~~
462 consultation with the board, shall do all of the following:

463 (1) Provide for the operation of state veterans homes
464 for the care of and support of elderly and disabled veterans
465 in this state as prescribed in this chapter.

466 (2) Adopt rules for the creation and operation of any
467 state veterans home.

468 (3) Apply for and accept gifts, grants, and other
469 contributions from the federal government or from any other
470 governmental unit.

471 (4) Use funds received from the federal government or
472 from any other governmental unit for the purposes authorized
473 and directed by the federal government or other governmental
474 unit in making the funds available.

475 (5) Accept gifts, grants, donations, and contributions
476 of real estate, both vacant and improved, facilities,



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477 services, or other property from individuals, firms,
478 corporations, organizations, and associations, and from county
479 and municipal corporations and their subdivisions, plus any
480 other sources of revenue for any state veterans homes. All
481 expenditures from the trust fund shall be made upon warrants
482 issued by the state Comptroller drawn on account held by the
483 State Treasury based upon claims approved by the ~~board~~
484 commissioner."

485 "§31-5A-7

486 (a) A trust fund in the State Treasury is created for
487 the benefit of the State Department of Veterans Affairs, to be
488 known as the Alabama Veterans Home Trust Fund.

489 (b) The trust fund shall consist of all funds received
490 by the board or the department from the United States, any
491 federal agency or institution, gifts, contributions, bequests,
492 any individual reimbursements, and any other source, for the
493 care or support of veterans, discharged other than under
494 dishonorable conditions, who have been admitted and cared for
495 at a state veterans home.

496 (c) Nothing contained in this section prohibits the
497 establishment and utilization of special agency accounts by
498 the department and its constituent institutions, ~~as may be~~
499 ~~approved by the board~~, for receipt and disbursement of the
500 personal funds of state veterans home residents and members or
501 for receipt and disbursement of charitable contributions and
502 donations for use by and for the benefit of residents and
503 members.

504 (d) The trust fund created pursuant to this section



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505 shall be used by the department to pay for the care of
506 veterans, discharged other than under dishonorable conditions,
507 in a state veterans home and to pay the general operating
508 expenses of a state veterans home, including the payment of
509 salaries and wages of officials and employees. Funds in the
510 trust fund may be used to remodel, repair, construct, build
511 additions, modernize, or add improvements of domiciliary or
512 hospital buildings necessary for the care of veterans, plus
513 architectural plans, specifications, or other pertinent costs
514 as approved by appropriate state agencies. All funds
515 deposited, plus income earned on investment or reinvestment,
516 shall be credited to the trust fund created pursuant to this
517 section. Any money remaining in the fund at the end of each
518 fiscal year shall remain on deposit in the State Treasury to
519 the credit of the Alabama Veterans Home Trust Fund. No funds
520 shall be withdrawn or expended for any purpose unless the
521 funds have been allotted and budgeted in accordance with
522 Article 4 of Chapter 4 of Title 41, and only in the amounts
523 and for the purposes provided by the Legislature in the
524 General Appropriation Act."

525 "§31-5A-8

526 (a) Admissions to and discharges from any state
527 veterans home shall be in accordance with the policies and
528 procedures established by the ~~board~~ department at the time an
529 application for admission or for discharge is submitted.

530 (b) The ~~board~~ department may admit and discharge
531 veterans to any state veterans home who qualify for care and
532 treatment under 38 U.S.C. §§ 1710 and 1741, and may adopt



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533 rules consistent with accepted medical considerations to carry
534 out this function."

535 "§31-5A-9

536 (a) The ~~board~~ department shall report annually to the
537 Governor the activities of the department regarding the
538 operation of the state veterans homes.

539 (b) The annual report shall contain an accounting of
540 all monies received and expended, statistics on veterans who
541 resided in the homes during the year, recommendations to the
542 Governor and the Legislature, and other matters deemed
543 pertinent by the ~~board~~ department.

544 (c) The commissioner, ~~with the approval of the board,~~
545 shall compile an annual budget request, as necessary, listing
546 needs for state funding for anticipated costs of veterans
547 homes. The budget request shall be submitted to the Department
548 of Finance in conjunction with the State Department of
549 Veterans Affairs annual budget requests."

550 "§31-5A-10

551 Each resident of any state veterans home shall pay
552 directly to the contracted service operator of the home the
553 cost of maintaining his or her residence at the home. The cost
554 shall be determined by ~~the board in conference with~~ the
555 commissioner. The cost of the care shall be paid by the 10th
556 day of each month. "

557 Section 3. This act shall become effective immediately.



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558
559
560 Senate

561 Read for the first time and referred04-Feb-25
562 to the Senate committee on Veterans
563 and Military Affairs
564
565 Read for the second time and placed05-Feb-25
566 on the calendar:
567 0 amendments
568
569 Read for the third time and passed18-Feb-25
570 as amended
571 Yeas 21
572 Nays 9
573 Abstains 1
574
575
576

Patrick Harris,
Secretary.

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579