

**SB70 ENGROSSED**



1 SB70  
2 895J22F-2  
3 By Senators Jones, Allen, Bell, Kitchens, Elliott, Price,  
4 Butler, Sessions, Williams, Stewart, Roberts, Hatcher, Kelley,  
5 Stutts, Smitherman, Beasley  
6 RFD: Veterans and Military Affairs  
7 First Read: 04-Feb-25



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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.



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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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



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

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

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

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

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

79 (1) Three members appointed by the Governor, one of  
80 whom shall be a female veteran.

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

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



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85 Commission.

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

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

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

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

96 (8) The Minority Leader of the House of  
97 Representatives, or his or her designee.

98 (9) The Minority Leader of the Senate, or his or her  
99 designee.

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

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

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

111 (3) An ex officio member shall continue to serve on the  
112 board as long as he or she holds the position that authorizes



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113 his or her service on the board.

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

137 (h) A majority of the board members shall constitute a  
138 quorum for the transaction of business by the board, and  
139 decisions shall be made on the basis of a majority of the  
140 quorum then present and voting. No vacancy in the membership



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141 of the board or the voluntary disqualification or abstention  
142 of any member shall impair the right of a quorum to exercise  
143 all of the powers and duties of the board.

144 (i) Members of the board may participate in meetings of  
145 the board in person, by means of telephone conference, video  
146 conference, or other similar communications equipment, so that  
147 all individuals participating in the meeting may hear each  
148 other at the same time. Participation by any such means shall  
149 constitute presence in person at a meeting for all purposes,  
150 including for purposes of establishing a quorum.

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

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

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

167 (1) Provide comprehensive support services to veterans  
168 and their families residing in this state including, but not



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169 limited to, all of the following:

170 a. Assistance with accessing federal and state  
171 benefits.

172 b. Career counseling and job placement services.

173 c. Mental health and wellness programs.

174 d. Education and training opportunities.

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

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

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

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

182 (5) Establish committees as necessary.

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

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

192 (8) Make and enter into contracts, leases, and  
193 agreements and take other actions as the board determines  
194 necessary or desirable to accomplish the purposes of this act  
195 and the center and exercise any power necessary for the  
196 accomplishment of the purposes of the center or incidental to





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197 the powers expressly provided by this act.

198 (9) Appoint, employ, and contract with employees,  
199 agents, advisors, consultants, and service providers  
200 including, but not limited to, attorneys, accountants,  
201 financial experts, and other advisors, consultants, and agents  
202 as the board determines necessary or desirable to accomplish  
203 any purpose of the center or incidental to the powers  
204 expressly provided by this act, and to fix the compensation of  
205 those individuals.

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

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

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

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

222 (b) The board may make, enter into, and execute  
223 contracts, agreements, and other instruments with, accept  
224 appropriations, loans, gifts, aid, and grants from, and



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225 cooperate with, any other individual or entity including, but  
226 not limited to, all of the following:

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

229 (2) For profit and nonprofit private entities.

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

235 (c) (1) Members of the board shall be subject to the  
236 state ethics laws under Chapter 25 of Title 36, Code of  
237 Alabama 1975, but members of the board shall not be required  
238 to submit a statement of economic interests under Section  
239 36-25-14, Code of Alabama 1975. The center is not a business  
240 for purposes of the state ethics laws, Chapter 25 of Title 36,  
241 Code of Alabama 1975, and a public official or public employee  
242 holding a position on the board is not precluded from taking  
243 official actions affecting the center as long as there is no  
244 impermissible personal gain.

245 (2) The board is not subject to the Alabama Open  
246 Meetings Act under Chapter 25A of Title 36, Code of Alabama  
247 1975.

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



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253 Code of Alabama 1975.

254 (b) Solely as a result of entering into contracts,  
255 leases, agreements, investments, or otherwise as provided in  
256 subsection (a), no for-profit or nonprofit private entity, nor  
257 the officers, employees, agents, or directors of any of the  
258 foregoing, shall become subject to state ethics laws or the  
259 Alabama Open Meetings Act under Chapter 25 and Chapter 25A of  
260 Title 36, Code of Alabama 1975; competitive bid laws under  
261 Article 5, commencing with Section 41-4-110, of Chapter 4 of  
262 Title 41, Code of Alabama 1975; Chapter 2 of Title 39, Code of  
263 Alabama 1975; or public records laws under Article 3,  
264 commencing with Section 36-12-40, of Chapter 12 of Title 36,  
265 Code of Alabama 1975.

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

272 Section 8. (a) The Alabama Veterans Resource Center  
273 Fund is created in the State Treasury. All monies received by  
274 the board pursuant to this act or otherwise from any source  
275 permitted by this act shall be deposited into the State  
276 Treasury to the credit of the fund. Amounts deposited into the  
277 fund shall be budgeted and allotted in accordance with  
278 Sections 41-4-80 through 41-4-96 and Sections 41-19-1 through  
279 41-19-12, Code of Alabama 1975.

280 (b) The center may accept additional funding from



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281 public and private sources, including appropriations, loans,  
282 federal gifts, grants, corporate sponsorships, and individual  
283 donations.

284           Section 9. The board, at any time and by majority vote,  
285 may cause its application for formation to be amended by  
286 having three members of its board of directors file an  
287 amendment with the Secretary of State, which shall be sworn to  
288 by each signatory thereto before an officer authorized to take  
289 acknowledgments to deeds.

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

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

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

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



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309 2025.



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311  
312 Senate

313 Read for the first time and referred .....04-Feb-25  
314 to the Senate committee on Veterans  
315 and Military Affairs  
316  
317 Read for the second time and placed .....05-Feb-25  
318 on the calendar:  
319 0 amendments  
320  
321 Read for the third time and passed .....06-Feb-25  
322 as amended  
323 Yeas 31  
324 Nays 0  
325 Abstains 0  
326  
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Patrick Harris,  
Secretary.

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