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SYNOPSIS:

Under existing law, the State Board of Veterans Affairs consists of the Governor and representatives of specified veteran service organizations, each appointed by the Governor upon nomination by the specified organization.

Under existing law, the board appoints the Commissioner to serve as the chief executive officer of the State Department of Veterans Affairs. The board also adopts rules relating to the governance of the department, approves all senior level executives within the department, sets department policy, and approves contracts entered into by the Commissioner.

This bill would authorize the Governor to appoint the Commissioner to serve at the pleasure of the Governor.

This bill would also revise powers of the board to authorize the board to serve in an advisory capacity to the Commissioner and the department. Members would be appointed by the Governor to reflect the entirety of the State's veteran community.

A BILL  
TO BE ENTITLED



AN ACT

29  
30  
31 Relating to veterans affairs; to amend Sections 31-5-2,  
32 31-5-3, 31-5-5, 31-5-6, 31-5-7, 31-5-8, 31-5-9, 31-5-10,  
33 31-5-13, 31-5A-3, 31-5A-4, 31-5A-5, 31-5A-6, 31-5A-7, 31-5A-8,  
34 31-5A-9, and 31-5A-10, Code of Alabama 1975, as last amended  
35 by Act 2024-442 of the 2024 Regular Session; to require the  
36 Governor, rather than the State Board of Veterans Affairs,  
37 to appoint the Commissioner of the State Department of  
38 Veterans Affairs to serve at the Governor's pleasure;  
39 to provide that the board serves in an oversight capacity; and  
40 to transfer certain duties from the board to the State  
41 Department of Veterans Affairs.

42 BE IT ENACTED BY THE LEGISLATURE OF ALABAMA:

43 Section 1. Sections 31-5-2, 31-5-3, 31-5-5, 31-5-6,  
44 31-5-7, 31-5-8, 31-5-9, 31-5-10, and 31-5-13, Code of Alabama  
45 1975, as last amended by Act 2024-442 of the 2024 Regular  
46 Session, are amended to read as follows:

47 "§31-5-2

48 The State Board of Veterans Affairs is established to  
49 oversee the State Department of Veterans Affairs. The  
50 department shall be composed of a commissioner and other  
51 officers and employees authorized to be appointed under this  
52 chapter who meet the qualifications prescribed by the ~~board~~  
53 commissioner. "

54 "§31-5-3

55 (a) (1) The board shall be composed of the Governor, as  
56 chair, and representatives, to serve for a term of four years



57 from the date of their respective appointments, who shall be  
58 selected from the memberships of the Alabama Department of the  
59 American Legion, the Veterans of Foreign Wars, the Disabled  
60 American Veterans, the Vietnam Veterans of America, AMVETS,  
61 the Military Order of the Purple Heart, the American  
62 Ex-Prisoners of War, Incorporated, the Alabama Alliance of the  
63 Military Officers Association of America, Incorporated, and  
64 the Marine Corps League.

65 (2) The nomination of the representatives shall be made  
66 by the executive committees or similar governing bodies of the  
67 respective organizations. There shall be one representative  
68 from each of the organizations for the first 7,500 resident  
69 members, or fraction thereof, and one additional  
70 representative from each organization for each additional  
71 7,500 resident members, or fraction thereof. The total  
72 memberships of the respective organizations shall be  
73 determined on July 1 of the year in which the representatives  
74 shall be designated from the state enrollment of each  
75 organization as duly verified for correctness by the adjutant  
76 or a similar officer of the organization. Notwithstanding the  
77 foregoing, the executive committees or similar governing  
78 bodies of the organizations shall each nominate to the  
79 Governor three veterans who are members of the organizations  
80 for each place on the board to which the organizations are  
81 entitled to have a nominee. The nominations shall also  
82 include, in representative proportions, veterans of every war  
83 which are included in the membership of the organizations. \_

84 (3) Notwithstanding subdivisions (1) and (2), if (i) a



85 vacancy occurs before the end of a term, (ii) an organization  
86 fails to nominate to the Governor a list of nominees within 90  
87 days after a term ends, or (iii) the membership of any  
88 organization decreases below 500 members, the Governor may  
89 appoint a veteran of his or her choosing in a manner that  
90 conforms with subdivision (4).

91 ~~(3)~~ (4) Appointments to the board shall be  
92 representative of the entirety of the state's veteran  
93 community. Board members shall include veterans from various  
94 branches of the Armed Forces of the United States and service  
95 eras (including active-duty service members, so long as  
96 permitted under federal law) and consist of both members and  
97 nonmembers of veteran service organizations. Board members  
98 should also represent entities that provide meaningful  
99 services to veterans and their families. The appointing  
100 authorities shall coordinate their appointments to assure that  
101 the membership of the board is inclusive and reflects the  
102 racial, gender, geographic, urban, rural, and economic  
103 diversity of the ~~state~~ state's veteran community.

104 (5) A member may not serve more than two consecutive  
105 terms.

106 (6) Within 60 days of the act adding this amendatory  
107 language, an organization may nominate a new slate of names  
108 from which the Governor shall appoint a new member to fill the  
109 remainder of the respective term.

110 (b) The board, ~~in conference with the commissioner,~~  
111 ~~shall adopt and amend policies and rules as may be necessary~~  
112 ~~to carry out this chapter~~ shall serve in an oversight capacity



113 and shall do all of the following:

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

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

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

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

122 ~~(c) The board, subject to Section 31-5-6, shall adopt~~  
123 ~~rules governing the manner of performance of all functions and~~  
124 ~~duties of the department and the various officers and~~  
125 ~~employees, including the selection and appointment of all~~  
126 ~~commissioners and assistant commissioners, district managers,~~  
127 ~~and veteran service officers. The rules shall have the force~~  
128 ~~and effect of law and prima facie evidence thereof may be~~  
129 ~~given in all courts and proceedings by the production of what~~  
130 ~~purports to be an official printed copy of the regulations,~~  
131 ~~alterations, repeal, or amendment.~~

132 ~~(d) The board may establish and operate through the~~  
133 ~~department state veterans cemeteries and may apply to the~~  
134 ~~government of the United States, or any subdivision, agency,~~  
135 ~~or instrumentality thereof, for funds for the purpose of~~  
136 ~~establishing, operating, and maintaining the cemeteries. The~~  
137 ~~department may enter into agreements with any subdivision of~~  
138 ~~the state for assistance in operating the cemeteries. The~~  
139 ~~department shall own the land on which the cemeteries are~~  
140 ~~located. The department may accept federal grant funds,~~



141 ~~funding from state subdivisions, donations from private~~  
142 ~~sources, and federal plot allowance payments. All of these~~  
143 ~~funds shall be deposited into the Veterans Assistance Fund and~~  
144 ~~may be used only for the establishment, operation, and~~  
145 ~~maintenance of veterans cemeteries. The department may accept~~  
146 ~~suitable cemetery land, in accordance with federal veterans~~  
147 ~~cemetery grant guidelines, from the federal government, state~~  
148 ~~government, state subdivisions, private sources, and any other~~  
149 ~~source wishing to transfer land for use as a veterans~~  
150 ~~cemetery. No funds used for these projects may be from the~~  
151 ~~Education Trust Fund. The commissioner may execute deeds and~~  
152 ~~other instruments of conveyance for the department. Any deed~~  
153 ~~of cemetery property to the department prior to August 1,~~  
154 ~~2012, is ratified and confirmed.~~

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

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

161 ~~(g)~~ (e) Members of the board shall be entitled to a per  
162 diem, to be fixed by the ~~board~~ commissioner, and their  
163 traveling and other necessary expenses actually incurred while  
164 attending meetings of the board or on the business of the  
165 department."

166 "§31-5-5

167 (a) (1) The department shall adopt rules governing the  
168 manner of performance of all functions and duties of the



169 department and the various officers and employees, including  
170 the selection and appointment of all assistant commissioners,  
171 district managers, and veteran service officers.

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

174 (3) On the effective date of this act, all rules  
175 previously adopted by the board shall be considered rules of  
176 the department until such time the department amends or  
177 repeals the rules.

178 (b) The department, in consultation with the board, shall  
179 establish and operate state veterans cemeteries and may apply  
180 to the government of the United States, or any subdivision,  
181 agency, or instrumentality thereof, for funds for the purpose  
182 of establishing, operating, and maintaining the cemeteries.  
183 The department may enter into agreements with any subdivision  
184 of the state for assistance in operating the cemeteries. The  
185 department shall own the land on which the cemeteries are  
186 located. The department may accept federal grant funds,  
187 funding from state subdivisions, donations from private  
188 sources, and federal plot allowance payments. All of these  
189 funds shall be deposited into the Veterans Assistance Fund and  
190 may be used only for the establishment, operation, and  
191 maintenance of veterans cemeteries. The department may accept  
192 suitable cemetery land, in accordance with federal veterans  
193 cemetery grant guidelines, from the federal government, state  
194 government, state subdivisions, private sources, and any other  
195 source wishing to transfer land for use as a veterans  
196 cemetery. No funds used for these projects may be from the



197 Education Trust Fund. The commissioner may execute deeds and  
198 other instruments of conveyance for the department. Any deed  
199 of cemetery property to the department prior to August 1,  
200 2012, is ratified and confirmed.

201 (c) The department, through the commissioner, ~~with the~~  
202 ~~approval of~~ and in consultation with the board, may contract  
203 with any organization of veterans which, for a period of five  
204 years next preceding the date of the contract, has maintained  
205 an established committee or agency rendering services to  
206 veterans, similar to the services referred to in Section  
207 31-5-4, to perform the services for veterans and to process  
208 any claims or matters of veterans who apply to the department  
209 for assistance when the veterans have executed a power of  
210 attorney to the veterans' organization. The department,  
211 through the contract, shall compensate the veterans'  
212 organizations on the basis of service rendered, which  
213 compensation shall be paid from sums appropriated to the  
214 department. No contract shall be made unless the ~~board~~  
215 commissioner determines, owing to the confidential  
216 relationships involved and the necessity of operating through  
217 agencies which the veterans involved will feel to be  
218 sympathetic towards their problems, that the services cannot  
219 satisfactorily be rendered other than through the agency of  
220 the veterans' organization and that the best interests of the  
221 veterans involved will be served if the contract is made. "

222 "§31-5-6

223 (a) The ~~board~~ Governor shall appoint a commissioner to  
224 serve ~~for a term of four years subject to removal by the board~~



225 ~~for cause~~ at the Governor's pleasure. The commissioner shall  
226 be appointed on the basis of education, ability, and  
227 experience in handling veterans' affairs, and without regard  
228 to political affiliations. The commissioner shall be a  
229 resident of this state, shall be a veteran who served on  
230 active duty for a period of 60 days or more in the Armed  
231 Forces of the United States and shall have been honorably  
232 discharged. The commissioner's salary shall be set by Governor  
233 and shall not be subject to Section 36-6-6.

234 (b) The commissioner shall be the executive and  
235 administrative officer of the department, ~~subject to the~~  
236 ~~authority of the board~~, and may issue administrative orders  
237 and directives to all officials and employees in the  
238 department.

239 (c) The department, acting through the commissioner,  
240 shall be the designated agency of this state to represent the  
241 state and its veterans before the United States Department of  
242 Veterans Affairs or any other agency dealing with the  
243 interests of veterans.

244 (d) The commissioner, ~~with the approval of~~ in  
245 consultation with the board, may enter into reciprocal  
246 agreements with other states to render services in this state  
247 to veterans who are nonresidents.

248 (e) The commissioner, ~~with the approval of the board~~,  
249 shall appoint all assistant commissioners, district managers,  
250 and veteran service officers as provided in this chapter, fix  
251 salaries, and establish minimum standards of service. This  
252 power shall be without regard to any limitation established by



253 law, unless any law passed hereafter shall refer specifically  
254 to a particular officer or employee of the department.

255 (f) The ~~comissioner~~commissioner shall appoint all  
256 personnel in the department as authorized or may be authorized  
257 in the future under the state Merit System and approved by the  
258 State Personnel Board.

259 (g) The commissioner, ~~with the approval of the board,~~  
260 may engage in activities designed to educate, recognize, and  
261 promote the mission of the board to veterans, the public,  
262 potential applicants, and other public agencies and, in doing  
263 so, may incur marketing expenditures for educational,  
264 informational, and promotional items to be used to further its  
265 purposes ~~as determined by the board.~~"

266 "§31-5-7

267 (a) The commissioner shall submit an annual budget to  
268 the board ~~for its approval~~ of all funds appropriated by the  
269 Legislature to the department for the specific purposes for  
270 which they are appropriated and also a budget of any federal  
271 funds that may be allotted to the state by the federal  
272 government for the purposes of the department according to the  
273 regulations of the federal authorities. The commissioner shall  
274 publish annually a full report of the operations and  
275 administration of the department, ~~together with~~  
276 ~~recommendations and suggestions,~~ and submit the report to the  
277 board.

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

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



281 (2) Cooperate with all other heads of the state  
282 departments in coordinating the plans and programs of state  
283 agencies that may properly be utilized in the administration  
284 of various aspects of the ~~problems of~~ challenges faced by  
285 veterans and dependents of veterans, ~~such as the office of the~~  
286 ~~State Adjutant General, the State Department of Education, the~~  
287 ~~State Department of Human Resources, the state Department of~~  
288 ~~Workforce, and any other state agencies furnishing services to~~  
289 ~~veterans.~~

290 (3) Provide a central contact between federal agencies  
291 dealing with the ~~problems of veterans, to include the United~~  
292 ~~States Department of Veterans Affairs, the Selective Service~~  
293 ~~System, the Social Security Administration, the Department of~~  
294 ~~Defense, and other federal agencies and state agencies that~~  
295 ~~may administer~~ administration of veterans' services and  
296 benefits.

297 (4) Maintain central case records of all veterans  
298 seeking services or benefits to create a clearinghouse of  
299 information and facilitate the interchange of information and  
300 case histories among state administrative agencies and the  
301 federal agencies.

302 (5) Become acquainted, and acquaint department  
303 associates and employees, with the federal, state, and local  
304 laws enacted for the benefit of members of the armed forces,  
305 veterans, and their families and dependents.

306 (6) Collect data and information about available  
307 facilities and services and cooperate with information or  
308 service agencies throughout the state to inform members of the



309 armed forces, veterans, their families and dependents, and  
310 military and civil authorities regarding the existence or  
311 availability of all of the following:

312 a. Educational training and retraining facilities.

313 b. Health, medical, rehabilitation, and housing  
314 services and facilities.

315 c. Employment and reemployment services.

316 d. Provisions of federal, state, and local laws  
317 affording rights, privileges, and benefits to members of the  
318 armed forces, veterans, and their families and dependents.

319 e. Other matters of similar, relative, or appropriate  
320 natures.

321 (7) Assist all resident veterans and their relatives,  
322 beneficiaries, and dependents in receiving from the United  
323 States and this state all compensation, pensions,  
324 hospitalization, insurance, education, employment, loan  
325 guarantees, or any other aid or benefit to which they may be  
326 or may become entitled under existing laws of the United  
327 States or of this state ~~and perform other related duties~~  
328 ~~assigned by the board.~~

329 (8) Cooperate and negotiate with the federal government  
330 and all national, state, and local governmental or private  
331 agencies to secure additional services or benefits for  
332 veterans, their families, and their dependents who are  
333 residents of this state."

334 "§31-5-8

335 The commissioner, ~~with the approval of the board,~~ may  
336 appoint additional assistant commissioners to serve as



337 employees in the department, subject to the rules of the ~~board~~  
338 department. Assistant commissioners shall be appointed on the  
339 basis of education, ability, and experience in handling  
340 veterans' affairs, and without regard to political  
341 affiliations. The appointees shall be residents of this state,  
342 shall be veterans who served on active duty for a period of 60  
343 days or more in the Armed Forces of the United States, and  
344 shall have been honorably discharged. "

345 "§31-5-9

346 (a) Except as provided in subsection (b), the  
347 commissioner, ~~with the approval of the board,~~ shall appoint a  
348 veteran service officer for each county in the state. Each  
349 veteran service officer shall be an employee of the department  
350 and subject to the rules of the ~~board~~ department. The veteran  
351 service officer shall be a resident of this state, a qualified  
352 elector therein, shall be a veteran who served on active duty  
353 for a period of 60 days or more in the Armed Forces of the  
354 United States, and shall have been honorably discharged. In  
355 making appointments, consideration shall be given to whether  
356 the applicants are residents of the county. The commissioner  
357 ~~and board~~ shall economize as far as possible in the  
358 administration of this section.

359 (b) (1) The commissioner, ~~with the approval of the~~  
360 ~~board,~~ shall determine whether there is a need for a veteran  
361 service officer in any particular county. In making this  
362 determination, the commissioner ~~and the board~~ shall consider  
363 the total population of the county, the number of men and  
364 women inducted into the armed services from the county, the



365 number of veterans present in the county, and special  
366 circumstances and facts involving the concentration of  
367 industries or other problems that may increase or decrease the  
368 number of veterans in certain localities.

369 (2) Where the circumstances do not justify establishing  
370 a separate office in each county, the commissioner, ~~with the~~  
371 ~~approval of the board,~~ shall establish service areas in the  
372 state containing one or more counties and shall establish a  
373 service office for each service area in a location most  
374 advantageous to the veterans within each area.

375 (c) The commissioner, ~~with the approval of the board,~~  
376 shall establish districts within the state containing one or  
377 more counties or service areas, and shall appoint district  
378 managers to manage or assist veteran service officers.  
379 District managers appointed under this section shall be  
380 selected in the same manner and possess the same  
381 qualifications as veteran service officers."

382 "§31-5-10

383 (a) Each veteran service officer and district manager  
384 shall perform the duties prescribed by policies, rules, and  
385 instructions adopted by the ~~board~~ department and shall be  
386 administratively responsible to the commissioner.

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

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

391 (2) Furnish information and data to the commissioner  
392 relative to various aspects of the issues of veterans and



393 dependents of veterans.

394 (3) Provide an information and referral service to  
395 veterans seeking aid and assistance in connection with matters  
396 pertaining to employment and reemployment, educational and  
397 vocational training, health, medical, rehabilitation, and  
398 housing services and facilities, emergency financial  
399 assistance, and other matters as appropriate.

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

403 (5) Assist all resident veterans and their relatives,  
404 beneficiaries, and dependents in receiving from the United  
405 States and this state all compensation, pension,  
406 hospitalization, insurance, education, employment, loan  
407 guarantees, or other aid or benefit to which they may be  
408 entitled under existing federal law or laws of this state, or  
409 which may be created, and perform all other related duties  
410 assigned by the ~~board~~ commissioner.

411 (6) Seek out and advise veterans of their rights and  
412 benefits under federal and state laws, encourage the use of  
413 educational opportunities, including trade and vocational  
414 training, and offer counsel to widows, orphans, and  
415 beneficiaries in order to secure the fullest extent of  
416 available benefits."

417 "§31-5-13

418 The department and the commissioner shall maintain  
419 offices in the capital city of the state. The commissioner,  
420 ~~under authority of the board,~~ in addition to any service



421 office, if deemed necessary, may set up and maintain a service  
422 office staffed by an assistant commissioner, veteran service  
423 officer, or district manager, with sufficient clerical  
424 assistance. "

425 Section 2. Sections 31-5A-3, 31-5A-4, 31-5A-5, 31-5A-6,  
426 31-5A-7, 31-5A-8, 31-5A-9, and 31-5A-10, Code of Alabama 1975,  
427 as last amended by Act 2024-442 of the 2024 Regular Session,  
428 are amended to read as follows:

429 "§31-5A-3

430 The department is the sole agency authorized to receive  
431 federal aid from the United States Department of Veterans  
432 Affairs or any other agency of the United States government  
433 authorized to pay federal aid to states for state homes under  
434 38 U.S.C. §§ 1741 and 1742, as amended, and from any other  
435 federal law or act of Congress providing for the payment of  
436 funds to states for the care of or support of disabled  
437 veterans in state homes. The department may receive from any  
438 source gifts, contributions, bequests, and individual  
439 reimbursements, the receipt of which does not exclude any  
440 other source of revenue. All funds received by the department  
441 shall be deposited in the State Treasury in the Alabama  
442 Veterans Home Trust Fund as established in Section 31-5A-7,  
443 and the funds shall be expended as authorized by the ~~board~~  
444 commissioner. "

445 "§31-5A-4

446 The department shall contract with a non-governmental  
447 entity to operate state veterans homes for the care and  
448 support of elderly or disabled veterans in this state.



449 Contracts for the procurement of services required to manage,  
450 administer, and operate a state veterans home shall be awarded  
451 on a competitive basis through the solicitation of proposals.  
452 The contract may be awarded to the vendor whose proposal is  
453 most advantageous to the state, taking into consideration cost  
454 factors, program suitability factors, management plan,  
455 excellence of program design, key personnel, corporate or  
456 company resources, financial condition of the vendor,  
457 corporate experience and past performance, and any other  
458 requirements deemed necessary by the ~~board~~ department and  
459 expressed in its solicitation for proposals. Any contract  
460 awarded under this section shall be for a period not to exceed  
461 five years. The ~~board~~ department is not required to select the  
462 vendor offering the lowest cost proposal but shall select the  
463 vendor who, in the ~~board's~~ department's discretion, offers the  
464 proposal most advantageous to this state. The award of  
465 contracts described in this section are exempt from the  
466 requirements of Chapter 16 and Chapter 4 of Title 41. "

467 "§31-5A-5

468 The commissioner, ~~subject to the approval of the board,~~  
469 shall appoint an executive director for oversight and  
470 coordination of all state veterans homes and shall also  
471 appoint an on-site director for each state veterans home. The  
472 executive director and on-site director positions created  
473 pursuant to this section shall be exempt status, and shall be  
474 subject to guidelines established by the ~~board~~ department.  
475 Each director shall be appointed on the basis of education,  
476 ability, and experience in the administration of medical



477 facilities or nursing homes, without regard to political  
478 affiliations. Each director shall perform his or her duties in  
479 accordance with the rules, guidelines, and general policies  
480 established by the ~~board~~ department and as provided in this  
481 chapter. "

482 "§31-5A-6

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

485 (1) Provide for the operation of state veterans homes  
486 for the care of and support of elderly and disabled veterans  
487 in this state as prescribed in this chapter.

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

490 (3) Apply for and accept gifts, grants, and other  
491 contributions from the federal government or from any other  
492 governmental unit.

493 (4) Use funds received from the federal government or  
494 from any other governmental unit for the purposes authorized  
495 and directed by the federal government or other governmental  
496 unit in making the funds available.

497 (5) Accept gifts, grants, donations, and contributions  
498 of real estate, both vacant and improved, facilities,  
499 services, or other property from individuals, firms,  
500 corporations, organizations, and associations, and from county  
501 and municipal corporations and their subdivisions, plus any  
502 other sources of revenue for any state veterans homes. All  
503 expenditures from the trust fund shall be made upon warrants  
504 issued by the state Comptroller drawn on account held by the



505 State Treasury based upon claims approved by the ~~board~~  
506 commissioner."

507 "§31-5A-7

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

511 (b) The trust fund shall consist of all funds received  
512 by the board or the department from the United States, any  
513 federal agency or institution, gifts, contributions, bequests,  
514 any individual reimbursements, and any other source, for the  
515 care or support of veterans, discharged other than under  
516 dishonorable conditions, who have been admitted and cared for  
517 at a state veterans home.

518 (c) Nothing contained in this section prohibits the  
519 establishment and utilization of special agency accounts by  
520 the department and its constituent institutions, ~~as may be~~  
521 ~~approved by the board,~~ for receipt and disbursement of the  
522 personal funds of state veterans home residents and members or  
523 for receipt and disbursement of charitable contributions and  
524 donations for use by and for the benefit of residents and  
525 members.

526 (d) The trust fund created pursuant to this section  
527 shall be used by the department to pay for the care of  
528 veterans, discharged other than under dishonorable conditions,  
529 in a state veterans home and to pay the general operating  
530 expenses of a state veterans home, including the payment of  
531 salaries and wages of officials and employees. Funds in the  
532 trust fund may be used to remodel, repair, construct, build



533 additions, modernize, or add improvements of domiciliary or  
534 hospital buildings necessary for the care of veterans, plus  
535 architectural plans, specifications, or other pertinent costs  
536 as approved by appropriate state agencies. All funds  
537 deposited, plus income earned on investment or reinvestment,  
538 shall be credited to the trust fund created pursuant to this  
539 section. Any money remaining in the fund at the end of each  
540 fiscal year shall remain on deposit in the State Treasury to  
541 the credit of the Alabama Veterans Home Trust Fund. No funds  
542 shall be withdrawn or expended for any purpose unless the  
543 funds have been allotted and budgeted in accordance with  
544 Article 4 of Chapter 4 of Title 41, and only in the amounts  
545 and for the purposes provided by the Legislature in the  
546 General Appropriation Act."

547           "§31-5A-8

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

552           (b) The ~~board~~ department may admit and discharge  
553 veterans to any state veterans home who qualify for care and  
554 treatment under 38 U.S.C. §§ 1710 and 1741, and may adopt  
555 rules consistent with accepted medical considerations to carry  
556 out this function."

557           "§31-5A-9

558           (a) The ~~board~~ department shall report annually to the  
559 Governor the activities of the department regarding the  
560 operation of the state veterans homes.



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

566 (c) The commissioner, ~~with the approval of the board,~~  
567 shall compile an annual budget request, as necessary, listing  
568 needs for state funding for anticipated costs of veterans  
569 homes. The budget request shall be submitted to the Department  
570 of Finance in conjunction with the State Department of  
571 Veterans Affairs annual budget requests."

572 "§31-5A-10

573 Each resident of any state veterans home shall pay  
574 directly to the contracted service operator of the home the  
575 cost of maintaining his or her residence at the home. The cost  
576 shall be determined by ~~the board in conference with~~ the  
577 commissioner. The cost of the care shall be paid by the 10th  
578 day of each month. "

579 Section 3. This act shall become effective immediately.