



**House Military and Veterans Affairs Reported
Substitute for SB70**

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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 subject to the Alabama Open Meetings
246 Act under Chapter 25A of Title 36, Code of Alabama 1975.

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



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

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

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

279 (b) The center may accept additional funding from
280 public and private sources, including appropriations, loans,



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281 federal gifts, grants, corporate sponsorships, and individual
282 donations.

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

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

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

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

307 Section 12. This act shall become effective on June 1,
308 2025.