

HB 2201 -2 STAFF MEASURE SUMMARY

House Committee On Veterans and Emergency Preparedness

Prepared By: Patrick Brennan, LPRO Analyst

Meeting Dates: 4/4

WHAT THE MEASURE DOES:

Directs Department of Veterans' Affairs to study and make recommendations regarding improvements to operations of Department. Requires Department to submit report on findings by January 1, 2021.

NOTE - placeholder language only - see "effect of amendment" section for more information.

ISSUES DISCUSSED:

EFFECT OF AMENDMENT:

-2 Replaces original measure. Establishes the Veteran Educational Bridge Grant Program within the Department of Veterans' Affairs to provide grants to veterans who are enrolled in an approved course of study that qualifies for U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs benefits, are eligible to receive federal financial assistance, and are unable to complete a degree program due to one or more required courses not being offered until a later date. Limits grants to \$5,000 per veteran. Establishes the Veteran Educational Bridge Grant Program Fund and allocates \$500,000 from the Veterans' Services Fund for purposes of program. Directs Department to submit report to interim legislative committees by September 15, 2020 on program status. Sunsets January 1, 2022.

BACKGROUND:

There are a number of federal and state programs to assist veterans in furthering their education, either within the university system, professional training, or apprenticeship programs. However, even with multiple programs, there are times when a veteran may not currently qualify for any assistance, leaving them unable to continue their educational training. House Bill 2825 creates a bridge loan program to provide assistance to veterans who do not currently qualify for aid, or for whom the aid they qualify for is currently unavailable.