

Veterans and Defense Affairs

Proposed Adjustments as Introduced				
(\$ in millions)				
	FY 2017 Proposed		FY 2018 Proposed	
	<u>GF</u>	<u>NGF</u>	<u>GF</u>	<u>NGF</u>
2016-18 Base Budget, Ch. 665	\$14.8	\$49.8	\$14.8	\$49.8
Proposed Increases	4.4	13.6	5.6	13.6
Proposed Decreases	<u>(0.0)</u>	<u>(2.4)</u>	<u>(0.0)</u>	<u>(2.4)</u>
\$ Net Change	4.4	11.2	5.6	11.3
HB/SB 30, as Introduced	\$19.2	\$61.0	\$20.4	\$61.1
% Change	30.0%	22.6%	37.9%	22.6%
FTEs	166.00	602.00	169.00	602.00
# Change	36.00	36.00	39.00	36.00

- **Secretary of Veterans and Defense Affairs**

- *Governor’s Commission Recommendations.* Adds \$600,000 GF each year to support the recommendations of the Governor’s Commission on Military Installations and Defense Activities. The recommendations were developed to support four goals, including protecting federal facilities and areas for growth in the Commonwealth; promoting business, education and other efforts to support, attract, and retain existing military installations and defense activities in the Commonwealth; supporting the Commonwealth’s role in research and development related to military missions, contracting and defense activities; and, expanding collaborative activities related to aerospace, cyber-security, modeling and simulation, energy, and unmanned systems. A companion amendment in HB/SB 29 includes \$250,000 in FY 2016 for this purpose.

- **Department of Veterans Services**

- *Professional Development.* Includes \$100,000 GF each year for training, education, conferences, and other professional development activities for agency personnel.

- ***Suffolk Veterans Cemetery.*** Adds 2 positions for operational support, to be funded from existing nongeneral funds.
- ***Virginia War Memorial – Security.*** Adds \$35,000 GF each year to cover increased security contract costs.
- ***Virginia War Memorial – Position Costs.*** Includes \$107,333 GF each year to annualize 2 positions (an Assistant Director and an Education Director), which were added by the 2015 General Assembly.
- ***Communications and Outreach.*** Provides \$145,574 GF the first year, \$159,689 GF the second year, and 1 position to improve communications to inform Virginia veterans and their families of the services and programs provided by the department and the Commonwealth.
- ***Veterans Hotline.*** Adds \$100,000 GF the first year and \$150,000 GF the second year for a contract with the Department of Social Services to expand the existing DSS 2-1-1 hotline to connect veterans with available services.
- ***Administrative Positions.*** Provides \$0.2 million GF each year and 2 positions, including an agency human resources specialist and a Policy Director.
- ***Veterans Care Center Administrators.*** Includes \$0.2 million GF and 1 position the first year, and \$0.4 million GF and 2 positions the second year to hire the administrators for the two new veterans care centers to be built in Hampton Roads and Northern Virginia.
- ***Veterans Care Center Operations.*** Includes \$11.2 million NGF each year and 35 positions to reflect projected revenues associated with the new 40-bed addition at the Sitter-Barfoot Veterans Care Center in Richmond, which opened in July 2015.
- ***Benefit Services Field Offices.*** Includes \$0.3 million GF and 6 positions the first year, and \$0.6 million GF and 8 positions the second year for four new field offices (to be located in Prince William County, Loudoun County, Williamsburg and the Pentagon). The agency anticipates three of these offices will open in FY 2017 and the fourth will open in FY 2018. Two positions are provided for each of the four new offices. With these four new offices, the total number of field offices will increase from 26 to 30.
- ***Career Development for Benefit Services Staff.*** Provides \$0.2 million GF the first year and \$0.7 million GF the second year for career development salary adjustments for benefits services field staff.

- ***Virginia Veterans Family Services (VVFS) Reorganization.*** Provides \$0.7 million GF and 14 positions each year to begin reorganizing this program, which was formerly known as the Virginia Wounded Warrior Program.
 - Currently, there are 45 full-time DVS representatives working on this program, but 35 are actually employees of 11 local Community Services Boards (CSBs), physically co-located in 19 CSBs. Five CSBs serve as the regional fiscal agents for this program.
 - This initiative proposes to phase-in over three years the restructuring of the 35 jobs into a new service delivery model, so that these representatives will become full-time employees of the Department of Veterans Services. The budget provides funding to transition the first 14 of the 35 CSB local employees to become full-time DVS state employees. The agency anticipates these employees will still be physically located in the CSBs.
- ***VVFS Regional Manager.*** Adds \$0.1 million GF each year and 1 position for a Senior Resource Specialist (team leader) in one of the VVFS regions. The actual location for this position has not yet been determined.
- ***Education, Training and Employment Division.*** Adds \$0.1 million GF the first year and \$0.2 million GF the second year and 2 positions (an assistant director and one support position) for the Virginia Education, Training and Employment (VETE) division of the agency. The V3, VTAP, and VMSDEP programs and G.I. Bill activities report to the director of this division.
- ***Virginia Values Veterans (V3).*** Adds \$0.3 million GF the first year, \$0.4 million GF the second year and 4 positions for the V3 Program. One of these is a new position and the other three are conversions of part-time positions.
 - Included within this amount is \$100,000 GF each year for the U.S. Department of Defense (DoD) SkillBridge program, which is intended to help veterans leverage their skills into civilian jobs. This is a new program for DVS, and the agency will be the first state veterans agency in the nation to implement this program at the state level for DoD.
- ***Incentives to Hire Veterans (V3).*** Amends language adopted by the 2015 General Assembly which created a new incentive for employers to hire veterans. The 2015 amendment provided \$500,000 GF in FY 2016 for a new grant program to provide incentives for Virginia businesses to hire military veterans. The program is intended to provide grants of up to \$1,000 for each veteran hired, on or after July 1, 2014, by qualifying Virginia businesses with 300 or fewer employees, up to a maximum annual grant of \$10,000 for each business.

The proposed language amendment, which is also included in HB/SB 29:

- Extends from one to five years the time following discharge from active military service during which the veteran may be hired;
 - Adds a new requirement that the veteran must have been unemployed for at least one year; and,
 - Strikes the language requiring that each such veteran hired shall be paid at least the prevailing average wage of the jurisdiction in which the job is located.
- ***Virginia Transition Assistance Program (VTAP).*** Adds \$0.2 million GF the first year, \$0.3 million GF the second year and 3 positions for VTAP.
 - ***Virginia Military Survivors and Dependents Education Program.*** Adds \$0.1 million GF and 1 position each year for VMSDEP program support.
 - ***Medic Initiative.*** Adds \$0.4 million GF each year and 3 positions for a pilot program to expand health care employment opportunities for military medics who are transitioning to civilian careers in Virginia. Companion legislation will be introduced to permit these veterans to practice in Virginia hospitals while obtaining their medical licensure.
 - ***GI Bill Contract Increase.*** Includes \$0.1 million NGF each year to support additional G.I. Bill certification requirements. DVS is the State Approving Agency for certification of G.I. Bill funding for public and private institutions of higher education in Virginia.