

2011 HOUSE GOVERNMENT AND VETERANS AFFAIRS

HB 1167

2011 HOUSE STANDING COMMITTEE MINUTES

House Government and Veterans Affairs Committee
Fort Union Room, State Capitol

HB 1167
January 20, 2011
13165

Conference Committee

Committee Clerk Signature

Carmen Hart

Explanation or reason for introduction of bill/resolution:

Create and enact new section relating to women veterans' month

Minutes:

Chairman Bette Grande opened the hearing on HB 1167 and then appeared before the committee.

Chairman Bette Grande: I had the opportunity to participate in a fundraising event. It is a group out of Texas. You can purchase your army boots and try to walk a mile in them. These are not broke in and I wouldn't go a mile in these things. I purchased these after I got back from Iraq. You pay double what they cost and the money and the proceeds go towards buying lotions, foot creams, powders, and things and sent to the women serving overseas. I am the prime sponsor on 1167. I have put this bill in because I believe that March being a women's health month type thing would also be beneficial that we honor and remember those surviving and departed veterans and those women who have served so courageously in the United States of America during all the various conflicts. I do this because currently there are almost 2 million women veterans in America. Women veterans span the generations of all the branches of the military including the National Guard and the reserve components. With a rapidly increasing number of women serving in the military today and returning from deployment as seasoned veterans, the VA facilities and veteran service organizations such as DAV are working overtime and ensuring that the unique needs of the women veterans are met. For decades the VA has been at the forefront for the health and lifestyle situations affecting the aging male. However, now, we must identify innovative courses of treatment and solutions to obstacles that are unique to women veterans, such as pregnancy, breast cancer, and other medical concerns. It is often forgotten that since the beginning of time women have served in all the wars and conflicts. The history of the women in the military is a history of love for country, for service, commitment, dedication, and courage. It includes sacrifice that has largely gone unrecognized. This is changing, and I would like to be a part of that. I had the opportunity this summer to spend a couple days in DC, and one of my favorite things when I get to DC is to get to the monuments. Veterans are my passion. I had to get to the Vietnam one this time. The veterans one—I had to see the women's monument and if you have not seen it, you are missing out. It is just beautiful, and you have to walk all the way around it and just spend time with each of the women in their role in that conflict. I ask for your support that

we can move this through quickly so the governor can sign it for March and we can move forward with this.

Rep. Lisa Meier: Are you aware of what other states are actually doing something like this honoring women veterans, and, if so, how many states and what month they do it in?

Chairman Bette Grande: There is a push from the National Foundation of Women Legislators who I am a part of. We have put this proposal out to all 50 states. I have not followed back with them. Maybe somebody else in the room may have that information.

Rep. Karen Rohr: Do we know the number of women veterans in the state of North Dakota?

Chairman Bette Grande: I believe we do have people that know that better than I.

John Jacobsen, Chairman of the Legislative Committee of the ND Veterans Coordinating Council, appeared in support of HB 1167. **Attachment 1.**

Brenda Bergsrud, Women Veterans' Coordinator for the state of North Dakota appeared in support. **Attachment 2.** I want to say that women have served our country. They tend to be reluctant to be recognized as veterans, and they are often very reluctant to claim the benefits.

Rep. Lisa Meier: Why are women are reluctant to claim benefits?

Brenda Bergsrud: That is a really tough question. Maybe it is that we women tend to be the support, so we don't want to ask for the support.

Rep. Lonny Winrich: I apologize, but I didn't know that there was a women veterans' coordinator for the state of North Dakota. Is that a state position? VA position?

Brenda Bergsrud: It is a state position. All 50 states with the exception of New Jersey have a women veterans' coordinator.

Gene Kouba, NDDVA, appeared on behalf of his boss, Lonnie Wangen, who was testifying at another hearing. He urges support of this bill. As 2008 state commander for the DAV I personally would like to see this bill passed. I have worked and talked to many women veterans throughout the state of which there is a pretty fair group here, and they have all told me that this is a great bill and we ought to support. We ask for a Do Pass.

Lyle Schuchard, Chairman of the Administrative Committee on Veteran's Affairs, appeared. **Attachment 3.** He also thanked the last legislature for allowing them to hire 1 full time women's veteran's coordinator.

Colonel Davina French, North Dakota National Guard, Government Affairs Officer, appeared. I am the person who is still active in the National Guard today. There are 5,000 air and army national guard members here in the state of North Dakota. I had the great pleasure of deploying four times to combat zones. There are two females in the state that

have done that. Out of that 5,000 air and army soldiers and airmen there are 600+ women that have deployed since 911. I was a 957 commander back in 2003-2004 where we lost three soldiers and had 18 purple hearts. With that company we had 49 women. The average age of those women was 19.2 years old. To answer your question, Rep. Meier, I don't know why we go seek help. We are strong. It is not that we help the men. It is just that we stand next to the men. If you pass this it gives us a day, it gives us a month to talk about the history, to talk about health, and to talk about things we need to talk about. When you start talking about thousands upon thousands female veterans and supporters, that makes an impact. The National Guard does support this bill.

Rep. Lonny Winrich: Back in the 2001 session of the legislature when we had the constitutional amendment that updated the language regarding the state militia and who could serve in it and so on so that it would recognize women. I remember in my floor speech presenting that amendment referring to the fact that one of our National Guard companies had recently left for Iraq under the command of Captain Davina French. It has been a pleasure to watch your career and to work with you over the years. Thank you.

Colonel French: The female major that gave the testimony that day was the very first female colonel in the state of North Dakota last year.

Stephanie Belohlavek Geiger, Cofounder of the Dakota Sisterhood of Women Veterans, appeared. We founded the Dakota Sisterhood in November of 2009. We felt it was very important that women veterans have a place to go to find some comrade. Our group started when the women's coordinator out of the VA had developed these medals for the World War II women veterans. She was going around the state and handing them out. At one of the presentations we were in a group of women and they were chatting—they were employees that had been together for about 15 years. I asked one of them if she was a veteran, and she replied yes. The other lady looked at her, mind you they had been working together for 15 years, and neither one knew that the other was a veteran. When women are working side by side and we talk about our service, we are doing a disservice to them. I think it is very important that there are 5,000 women veterans in the state of North Dakota, and we can't get more than 50 of them to come together during a summit. Something needs to change, and I think this would be a very good step for that to happen.

Rep. Lisa Meier: I don't know if you remember or not but we went to school together. How long have you served?

Stephanie Belohlavek Geiger: I served just about six years in the Marine Corps. I had to get out on a hardship discharge during Gulf War. My husband was already sent over and I had just had a baby and I had an 18 month old also. I was stationed in Hawaii and there wasn't daycare, and I couldn't afford daycare. My daycare bill was more than I made. They don't send both spouses in the Marine Corps, so I had to get out.

There was no one neutral or in opposition to this bill.

The hearing was closed.

Rep. Lisa Meier made a motion for a **Do Pass**.

Rep. Karen Rohr seconded the motion.

Chairman Bette Grande: Brenda, can I ask a question of you? This resolution that you have attached is this something you want to use as the proclamation with the Governor? You want me to submit this to the Governor?

Brenda Bergsrud: Yes, please.

DO PASS, 12 YEAS, 0 NAYS, 1 ABSENT AND NOT VOTING. Rep. Karen Rohr ended up being the carrier of this bill.*

*To begin with Rep. Meier was going to carry this bill and later on Chairman Grande changed it to Rep. Rohr.

Date: 1-20-11
 Roll Call Vote #: 1

2011 HOUSE STANDING COMMITTEE ROLL CALL VOTES
BILL/RESOLUTION NO. 1167

House GOVERNMENT AND VETERAN AFFAIRS Committee

Check here for Conference Committee

Legislative Council Amendment Number _____

Action Taken Do Pass Do Not Pass Amended Adopt Amendment

Rerefer to Appropriations Reconsider

Motion Made By Rep Meier Seconded By Rep Rohr

Representatives	Yes	No	Representatives	Yes	No
Chairman Bette Grande	✓		Bill Amerman	✓	
Vice Chairman Randy Boehning	✓		Ron Guggisberg	✓	
Glen Froseth			Lonny Winrich	✓	
Karen Karls	✓				
Lisa Meier	✓				
Gary Paur	✓				
Karen Rohr	✓				
Mark Sanford	✓				
Vicky Steiner	✓				
Roscoe Streyle	✓				

Total (Yes) 12 No 0

Absent 1

Floor Assignment Rep. Rohr

If the vote is on an amendment, briefly indicate intent:

REPORT OF STANDING COMMITTEE

HB 1167: Government and Veterans Affairs Committee (Rep. Grande, Chairman)
recommends **DO PASS** (12 YEAS, 0 NAYS, 1 ABSENT AND NOT VOTING).
HB 1167 was placed on the Eleventh order on the calendar.

2011 SENATE POLITICAL SUBDIVISIONS

HB 1167

2011 SENATE STANDING COMMITTEE MINUTES

Senate Political Subdivisions Committee
Red River Room, State Capitol

HB 1167
March 14, 2011
15306

Conference Committee

Committee Clerk Signature



Explanation or reason for introduction of bill/resolution:

Relating to women's veterans' month.

Minutes:

You may make reference to "attached testimony."

Senator Andrist opened up the committee hearing on HB 1167, relating to women's veterans' month.

Representative Bette Grande, District 41. As we start out, I would like to amend this bill. After we had passed this I was approached by the womens veterans groups that it could have been probably written a little more inclusive for some of the women who have served in other capacities. What it will state starting on Line 7, March of each year is Women Veterans' Month. Each year the governor shall issue a proclamation on March 1, in honor and remembrance of surviving and departed women veterans who have served honorably and with courage (on behalf) (strike in all) of the United States of America (strike s), (strike wars and conflicts) since the American Revolutionary War.

What came to mind when they offered this was the USO. Not necessarily in the conflict, but they served well. The 'Rosie the Riveters', who were not formally in the conflict yet were the great support of the war. Short video was shown to the committee called Women in War.

Senator Lee: My concern is with your amendment actually. I totally understand the role as well as anybody of the people who were at home and worked in the factories and did all of that, but that is not the same in my view as being in the military. I would love to see something done to recognize all the people who were at home, the country just all worked together. It is not the same to me as for those who are in the military. I would like to see them recognized in a different way, because those who have been actual military members have a unique experience that even though it is a shared experience in one way with the folks who were at home and did all the remarkable sacrificial things as well, it is not the same. I struggle a little bit with that so if you could comment on that.

Representative Grande: I agree in that I see in honoring of the war of the conflict portion, but I do know that those who actually had the boots on the ground are the ones who are asking for this change.

Senator Andrist: I shared some of the same thoughts as Senator Lee, on your amendments. It does, if I understood your proposed amendments, it would leave the word 'veterans' in there, so it still would not compass USO workers and defense workers, and people like that. **Representative Grande:** Yes. I will allow them to address that. I think that a big part is what needs to be looked at is yes the conflict. The Veterans hold it a different standard, and we actually have that discussion going on right now, on Veterans' Preference. If you weren't in the war time do you get veterans preference, but you're still a veteran? That is a question right now in front of the committee. If you served you served. I come from a veteran is a veteran and so there is that conflict but it is a conflict that they also have amongst themselves as to what is more honorable. If having signed up between 1975 and 2001 and we had no war or conflict, but I served my nation and my state and so am I a veteran or am I not? Should I be honored with that service time? There were no conflicts, no wars for me to go to so I am a peacetime veteran. Does that make me a veteran or not?

Brenda Bergsrud: Women's Veteran's Coordinator for the State of North Dakota. In support of HB 1167. See written testimony #1. I would like to address Senator Lee and your concerns about the change in the bill. I hold women veteran meetings monthly throughout the state at different locations and in Jamestown I had a female veteran there, when she was talking about her time in service it was actually during the Vietnam era and we all know that era was not a pleasant time. She was chosen to serve as a nurse in CA, and she was not sent over to Vietnam and she still deserves to be recognized. She is a veteran. It was during war time era but she was not in country. That is the meaning for the change.

Senator Judy Lee: I want to clarify,, I didn't say that we should be eliminating womens veterans who were not in combat, anymore than we should eliminate men veterans who are not in combat, I am talking about including people who are not veterans and the amendments which Rep. Grande mentioned leaves in the word veterans and we're talking about the people who worked on behalf of the US and mentioned Rosie the riveter who are backed the defense industry, and all that is different. We need it to change for somebody who was in the military during a peacetime. That would be fine if they all were, but my concern is having veterans. I want to differentiate veterans who serve in the military anyplace than people who are not veterans who are also doing wonderful things for the country during the time like WWII or whenever. In my mind there is a difference between civilians and veterans. I want to make it very clear that this is not it. **Chairman Andrist:** I think we have covered that base if we leave the word veterans in, that perspective makes me more comfortable with it.

John Jacobsen: Chairman of the Legislative Committee of the North Dakota Veterans Coordinating Council. In support of HB 1167; see written testimony #2.

Gene Kouba: Commissioner of Veterans Affairs, in support of HB 1167. If you work with Human Services in the state of North Dakota you are instructed to call me on Veterans' Preference. Should you give preference when you hire a veteran in your department right now that veteran must have wartime service in order to get the 5 point preference from the state in order to get an interview and probably the job. Her dilemma is, right now if we take out the word wartime in our law and go with anyone that is honorable discharged, you now have people that were in service during a draft, Vietnam, that have the wartime service

because of a blanket that was given to the Veterans meaning anyone who served, and you have everyone that served after 9-11-2001 is now currently considered a war time veteran, but you have these little groups of veterans 1984-1988 where there was no war and they don't get preference. The dilemma she faces is, do they get preference because they are honorable discharged. Should they receive preference in hiring employment in North Dakota. I don't know. I get a lot of calls on this, whatever decision she makes I will agree with her, but she has a real dilemma whether or not she should give preference to all these veterans because they are honorable discharged. They do not have wartime service.

Chairman Andrist: It would be my presumption that this bill would not set the standards for veterans preference? **Gene Kouba:** No, but she has one in her committee that will (meaning Representative Grande).

None spoke in opposition to the bill.

Lieutenant Colonel Davina French from the North Dakota National Guard Government and Affairs Office. Neutral on HB 1167. In this generation from global war on terror, we have over 500 women in both the air and the army National Guard that have served in combat. By doing this sir, what your doing is opening up an opportunity and lane to educate women veterans because, part of the issue is women of the past were raised to be strong. We are raised not to complain, to take care of other people so we come home from war, and what do we do but it all in little boxes and put it away and never to probably talk about it except amongst each other. We have pockets of young and old female veterans that we can stand at and put some effort into media, some money to coordinate conferences; these are the issues of today. Let us reach back into the past to grab all the female veterans from all the services that we have in North Dakota.

Senator Andrist: Well the term, Veterans' would encompass National Guard would it not?

Lieutenant French: Yes sir, those of us who have served in a wartime area and yes.

Chairman Andrist: If you have never been called up would you not be a veteran?

Lieutenant French: We have this discussion many times. Do you want the official answer?

Gene Kouba: I will define veteran for you. The National Guard, unless they serve on a deployment called Title X, are not considered veterans in the VA or the state of North Dakota. If you are in the Guard and there is people who have been in guard for 20+ years and have never had a deployment, it is considered for training and they are not eligible for benefits, unless they are deployed or activated.

Chairman Andrist: Would you just say, not eligible for benefits, but... **Gene Koubas:** The only benefit they get is a place at the Veterans' Cemetery and a flag.

Chairman Andrist: So they are considered veterans? **Gene Koubas:** As far as the Veterans Cemetery. Yes sir.

Chairman Andrist closed the hearing on HB 1167.

Move to adopt the amendment
Senator Olafson
2nd: Senator Judy Lee
Roll Call vote:

Move do pass as amended:
Senator Olafson
2nd: Senator Laffen
Roll Call Vote:

Carrier: Senator Judy Lee

PROPOSED AMENDMENT TO HOUSE BILL NO. 1167

Page 1, line 9, after "courage" insert "on behalf"

Page 1, line 9, remove "in all"

Page 1, line 9, after "America" remove "'s"

Page 1, line 10, remove "wars and conflicts"

REPORT OF STANDING COMMITTEE

HB 1167: Political Subdivisions Committee (Sen. Andrist, Chairman) recommends **AMENDMENTS AS FOLLOWS** and when so amended, recommends **DO PASS** (5 YEAS, 0 NAYS, 0 ABSENT AND NOT VOTING). HB 1167 was placed on the Sixth order on the calendar.

Page 1, line 9, replace "in all" with "on behalf"

Page 1, line 9, remove "America's"

Page 1, line 10, replace "wars and conflicts" with "America"

Renumber accordingly

2011 TESTIMONY

HB 1167

Attachment,
1167

NORTH DAKOTA VETERANS COORDINATING COUNCIL

My name is John L. Jacobsen. I am the Chairman of the Legislative Committee of the North Dakota Veterans Coordinating Council. I am also a member of the American Legion and the Veterans of Foreign Wars.

I served in the North Dakota National Guard and the US Army Reserve for a total of 30 years. I retired in 1995 as a Colonel. I served on Active Duty in 1991 during Operation Desert Shield/Desert Storm in the Persian Gulf, stationed in the United Arab Emirates.

The Coordinating Council is made up of 15 members, 3 from each of the five Veterans Organizations in North Dakota:

- American Legion
- AMVETS
- Disabled American Veterans
- Veterans of Foreign Wars
- Vietnam Veterans of America

It is the policy of the Coordinating Council to support legislation that will benefit the welfare of the members of the Armed Forces. The committee **MUST** concur totally, that is all 15 members must agree on the legislation to be supported or else it does not get the support.

In this case, I have been instructed to recommend to this legislative committee that a "DO PASS" is supported by the Veterans Coordinating Council.

House Bill No. 1167

Attachment 2
1167

Chairperson Grande and members of the Government and Veteran's Affairs committee, I am Brenda Bergsrud, Women Veteran's Coordinator for the state of North Dakota.

I am here today to support the passage of House Bill No. 1167.

Per the U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs census there are approximately 60,000 veterans in North Dakota of which 5,000 are female veterans. On a larger scale there are almost 2 million women veterans in America.

I currently work with women veterans throughout our state. Monthly meetings for our women veterans are held at various locations throughout North Dakota to inform and support.

It's often forgotten that since the beginning of time, women have served in all wars and conflicts. The history of women in the military is a history of love for country, service, commitment, dedication, and courage, and it includes sacrifices that have largely gone unrecognized. That is changing, but we must be part of that change.

This completes my presentation of support for HB 1167.

WHEREAS, women have served honorably and with courage in all of America's wars and conflicts since the American Revolution; and

WHEREAS, the United States military has evolved from a predominantly male force to a force of over 14% women who are currently serving on active duty; and nearly 17% serving in the Reserves and National Guard, and

WHEREAS, the population of women veterans is increasing exponentially from 1.1 million in 1980 to a projection of nearly 2 million by 2020 and will comprise more than 10% of the veteran population; and

WHEREAS, the projected population of male veterans is expected to continue to decline; and

WHEREAS, given that an unprecedented number of women are serving in the military and participating in Operation Enduring Freedom and Operation Iraqi Freedom, the U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) is working to provide consistent, comprehensive, and quality health care and benefits to women veterans of all eras; and

WHEREAS, the number of female veterans has increased over the last decade because there is an increasing number and proportion of women who are entering and leaving the military, women are living longer than men and have a younger age distribution compared to male veterans; and

WHEREAS, even though VA has been at the forefront of healthcare and lifestyle solutions affecting an aging male population, there is now a growing need to improve health care services for women veterans, ensure clinicians are properly trained to provide primary care and gender specific care to women of all ages, and identify innovative courses of treatment and solutions to obstacles that are unique to women veterans; and

WHEREAS, with a rapidly increasing number of women serving in the military today and returning from deployments as seasoned veterans, and some with exposure to combat, VA facilities and veterans service organizations are working to ensure that the post-deployment mental and physical health needs unique to women veterans are also met; and

WHEREAS, even though the roles of women in the military have changed over time and will continue to change, they deserve to be acknowledged for their military service and treated with equal respect; now

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED, that the state of North Dakota encourages the North Dakota Department of Veterans Affairs and its women veterans state coordinator to work in conjunction with the National Foundation for Women Legislators and the Center for Women Veterans at the U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs, to reach out to all women veterans within the state to encourage them to bring their specific needs and concerns to the attention of agency officials so that state legislators and agency officials may work together to identify unique issues impacting women veterans and consider policy solutions that will improve the quality of life for women veterans within the state; and

THEREFORE BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that the state of North Dakota formally honors all of the women in this state who have heroically answered their call to duty and recognize the important role women have played in shaping this great nation.

January 19, 2011

ND DVA
Attn: Brenda Bergsrud
Womens Veterans Coordinator
P.O. Box 7184
Bismarck ND 58507

To Whom It May Concern:

I am currently the National VFW Vice Chairperson for She Serves. I am a retired MSgt with 20 years of service in the Air Force and spent one tour in Iraq. I feel as a woman veteran that I have been taken care of but this doesn't happen to all female veterans and they need to know that there are programs out there to help them. They also need to realize that their service to this country is appreciated and their stories need to be told.

It is important for the state of North Dakota to recognize the month of March as Women Veteran's month. There are currently about 1.8 million women veterans. Many women are sent into combat and perform the same jobs as men. We need to be proud of our women in the military and recognize them as the heroes they are.

Sincerely,

Joy Mikyska

Your Rights as a Veteran

ND Department of Veterans Affairs

*To be treated with respect,
dignity and courtesy.*

*To know what services and
programs you
are entitled to receive.*

*To be dealt with
in a timely manner.*

*To report discrimination, unfair
treatment or any unseemly
action by anyone at the
North Dakota Department of
Veterans Affairs
without fear of reprisal.*

Mission Statement

ND Department of Veterans Affairs

*Assist all veterans of
North Dakota and their
dependents*

*in obtaining all benefits to
which they are entitled, both
federal and state,
either by direct contact or
through the assistance of the
County Veterans
Service Officer.*



**NORTH DAKOTA
VETERANS
AFFAIRS**

4201 38th St SW Ste 104
PO Box 9003
Fargo, ND 58106-9003
Phone: 701-239-7165
Toll Free: 866-634-8387
Fax: 701-239-7166
Website: <http://www.nd.gov/veterans/>

VETERANS AID LOAN

The Veterans' Aid Fund is a permanent fund to be used solely for the purpose of making loans to veterans or their widow/widowers.

To qualify, the applicant is required to be a veteran as defined under NDCC 37-14, or an un-remarried widow/widower of eligible veteran; a resident of North Dakota for at least one year, and have the financial ability to pay loan back.

HARDSHIP ASSISTANCE PROGRAM

The purpose of this grant is to provide assistance to veterans as defined in NDCC 37-14, their spouses, or un-remarried widow/widowers of eligible veterans. The individual must have a need for dental work, eye glasses, hearing aids, or transportation for medical treatment, be a citizen of North Dakota for at least one year and meet income guidelines.

VETERANS PREFERENCE

Veterans [as defined in NDCC 37-01-40, subsection 2] are entitled to preference, over all other applicants, in appointment or employment by governmental agencies, provided that such veteran is a U.S. citizen at the time of application for employment.

Veterans qualified for preference may not be disqualified from holding any position with any agency because of physical or mental disability, unless the disability renders them unable to properly perform the duties of the position applied for.

TRANSPORTATION SYSTEM

The veterans' transportation system is designed to aid veterans by providing free transportation to a Veterans Hospital. Currently, there are 5 vans on scheduled routes bringing veterans to Fargo, North Dakota or Miles City, Montana. The cost of the program is underwritten in part by the Post War Trust Fund.

VETERANS CEMETERY

The North Dakota Veterans Cemetery was established by an act of the 1989 Legislative Assembly. This cemetery is located on a 35 acre tract of land in the southwest corner of Fort Abraham Lincoln State Park, south of Mandan ND.

For more information:

Phone: 701-667-1418

Fax: 701-667-1419

Web Site: www.nd.gov/vet

E-mail: vetcemnd@nd-arrg.ngb.army.mil

NORTH DAKOTA VETERANS HOME

The North Dakota Veterans Home, located in Lisbon, North Dakota, consists of 111 basic care and 38 skilled nursing beds. The Veterans Home was established to provide service to an eligible veteran, the spouse or surviving spouse of a veteran.

For more information:

North Dakota Veterans Home

1400 Rose Street

PO Box 673

Lisbon, ND 58054

Phone: 701-683-6500

Website: <http://www.nd.gov/ndvh/>

SPECIAL LICENSE PLATES

P.O.W. - A veteran, while serving in the U.S. armed forces was a prisoner of war and has received an honorable discharge from the U.S. armed forces, may be issued a special number license plate. On the death of the veteran, the surviving spouse may retain the numbered plate as an active plate.

Veteran's Cemetery - Distinctive numbered plates may be issued to individuals eligible for interment in the North Dakota Veterans' Cemetery. The surcharge collected will be divided between the Veterans' Cemetery Trust Fund and the Veterans' Cemetery Maintenance Fund.

National Guard - Distinctive numbered plates may be issued to members of the National Guard. The Adjutant General shall certify those members of the National Guard eligible to receive the plates.

PARKS ADMISSION

Disabled Veterans/POWs—ND veterans with a 100 percent, service-related disability and former POWs are eligible for a free annual permit. All other ND veterans with service related disabilities are eligible to receive an annual permit for \$20. This program is available to North Dakota residents only, with VA proof of disability or status, or a ND DAV/POW license plate.
For more information:

ND Parks & Recreation Department
1600 E. Century Avenue, Suite 3
Bismarck, ND 58503-0649
Phone: 701-328-5357
Website: <http://www.ndparks.com/>

TUITION WAIVER

Any eligible dependent, as defined in section 15-10-18.2, upon being duly accepted for enrollment into any North Dakota state-supported institution of higher education or state-supported career and technical education school, must be allowed to obtain a bachelor's degree or certificate of completion, for so long as the dependent is eligible, free of any tuition and fee charges, however, that the bachelor's degree or certificate of completion is earned within a forty-five-month or ten-semester period or its equivalent; and further provided that tuition and fee charges shall not include costs for aviation flight charges or expenses.
Contact the registrar's office of the school you are planning to attend.

VETERAN'S BONUS

The 2007 Legislature passed additional legislation providing for payment of adjusted compensation (bonus) for certain domestic and foreign service. For information on the eligibility requirements and the application, please visit the ND National Guard website at: www.guard.com/benefits/default.asp?ID=302

PROPERTY TAX EXEMPTION

Certain qualified disabled veterans may be eligible for a property tax exemption as stated in North Dakota Century Code 57-02-08.20.
For further information, please contact the county auditor's office where you reside.

For further information on these programs or other benefits you may be entitled to, please contact the veterans service officer of your county listed in this brochure.

VETERANS SERVICE OFFICERS

VETERANS SERVICE OFFICERS

Adams	567-4283		Mountrail	628-2063	M-F, 8:30-5
Barnes	845-8511	M-F, 8-5	Nelson	247-2531	T-Th, 8-4:30
Benson	473-5451	W&F, 8-4:30	Oliver	794-3404	2/4th T, 8:30-4
Billings	225-7967	M-F, 8-5	Pembina	265-4460	T, 1-5 W&Th 9-5
Botineau	228-3904	M&W, 9-3	Pierce	776-6841	M-W, 9-5
Bowman	523-5512	Anytime	Ramsey	662-7048	M-F, 8-12
Burke	377-2820	T&Th 8:30-4:30	Ransom	683-6126	T&Th, 8:30-5
Burleigh	222-6698	M-F, 8-5	Renville	756-6403	Anytime
Cass	241-5756	M-F, 8-5	Richland	642-7807	M-F, 8-5
Cavalier	256-2146	T&W, 8:30-12	Rolette	477-5265	Th, 9-4:30
Dickey	742-2223	M, T, Th&F 12:30-4:30	Sargent	724-6241	M, 9-4:30
Divide	694-6641	Flexible	Sheridan	465-3329	
Dunn	456-7654	M-Th, 8-5 F, 8-12	Sioux	854-3424	M, 9-1
Eddy	947-2874		Slope	879-6234	Anytime
Emmons	254-5410	M&T, 8-4:30 W, 8-12	Standing Rock	854-8527	M-F, 8-4:30
Ft. Berthold	627-2247	M-F, 8-4:30	Stark	456-7654	M-Th, 8-5 F, 8-12
Ft. Totten	766-1745	M-F, 8-4:30	Steele	945-2623	Anytime
Foster	652-2170	W, 9-11:30	Stutsman	252-9043	M-F, 8-5
Golden Valley	440-0351	Th, 12:30-4:30	Towner	968-4363	T-Th, 9-5
Grand Forks	780-8296	1&3 Wed	Trail	636-4414	Hillsboro
Grant	622-3693	M&T, 8-4			M-W, 8-4:30
Griggs	797-3717	2nd/4th Th, 9-12	Walsh	352-5030	Mayville
Hettinger	563-4797	By Appointment	Ward	857-6490	Th, 8:30-11:30
Kidder	475-2632	M, 9-5	Wells	324-2888	M-W, 8-4:30
LaMoure	883-5301	M-F, 8:30-4:30	Williams	577-4550	Th, 8-11
Logan	754-2239	M-F, 8:30-4:30			M-F, 8-4:30
McHenry	537-5724	W, 9-11, 1-3			M-F, 9-5
McIntosh	452-4336				M-F, 8-5
McKenzie	444-6853	M-F, 8-5			
McLean	462-8541	M-F, 8-4:30			
Mercer	745-3392	M&T, 7-3			
Morton	667-3365	M-F, 8-5			

ND DVA BRANCH OFFICE

1929 North Washington

P. O. Box 7184, Bismarck 58507

Phone: 328-5465

Fax: 5468

Attachment 3

1167

TESTIMONY ON HB 1167
9:30 FORT UNION ROOM
GOVERNMENT & VETERANS AFFAIRS COMMITTEE
LYLE SCHUCHARD, CHAIRPERSON
ND AMINISTRATIVE COMMITTEE ON VETERANS' AFFAIRS
January 20, 2011

GOOD MORNING CHAIRMAN GRANDE AND COMMITTEE MEMBERS.
I AM LYLE SCHUCHARD, CHAIRMAN OF THE ADMINISTRATIVE
COMMITTEE ON VETERAN'S AFFAIRS.

THE ADMINISTRATIVE COMMITTEE ON VETERANS' AFFAIRS IS A 15
MEMBER COMMITTEE APPOINTED BY THE GOVERNOR FROM
NAMES SUBMITTED BY EACH OF THE STATE'S 5 MAJOR VETERANS
ORGANIZATAIONS. THE FIVE ARE THE AMERICAN LEGION,
DISABLED AMERICAN VETERANS, (DAV), VETERANS OF FOREIGN
WARS (VFW), VIETNAM VETERANS OF AMERICA (VVA), AND THE
AMERICAN VETERANS (AMVETS). WE ARE RESPONSIBLE FOR
OVERSEEING THE OPERATIONS OF THE NORTH DAKOTA
DEPARTMENT OF VETERANS AFFAIRS.

THIS BILL IS TO RECOGNIZE WOMEN VETERANS FOR THEIR
SERVICE, SACRIFICE AND DEDICATION TO THEIR COUNTRY.

THE ADMINISTRATIVE COMMITTEE ON VETERANS AFFAIRS HAS
VOTED TO APROVE THIS BILL.

THEREFORE I ASK THAT THE COMIITTEE GIVE FAVORABLE
CONSIDERATION TO PASSING HB 1167.

DO YOU HAVE ANY QUESTIONS OF ME?

THANK YOU FOR LETTING ME TESTIFY TODAY.

House Bill No. 1167

Chairperson Andrist and members of the Political Subdivisions committee, I am Brenda Bergsrud, Women Veteran's Coordinator for the state of North Dakota.

I am here today to support the passage of House Bill No. 1167.

Per the U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs census there are approximately 60,000 veterans in North Dakota of which 5,000 are female veterans. On a larger scale there are 23.4 million veterans in our country with nearly 2 million being females. That is 8 percent of the total veteran population. It is projected that women will comprise 10 percent of the veteran population by 2020.

I currently work with women veterans throughout our state. Monthly meetings for our women veterans are held at various locations throughout North Dakota to inform and support.

Throughout history women have played important roles in the military. It is our responsibility to recognize these essential roles and prepare for the evolving needs of women veterans. Military

women have shown love for country, service, commitment, dedication, and courage, and it includes sacrifices that have largely gone unrecognized. That is changing, but we must be a part of that change.

This completes my presentation and I ask for passage of HB 1167.

WHEREAS, women have served honorably and with courage in all of America's wars and conflicts since the American Revolution; and

WHEREAS, the United States military has evolved from a predominantly male force to a force of over 14% women who are currently serving on active duty; and nearly 17% serving in the Reserves and National Guard, and

WHEREAS, the population of women veterans is increasing exponentially from 1.1 million in 1980 to a projection of nearly 2 million by 2020 and will comprise more than 10% of the veteran population; and

WHEREAS, the projected population of male veterans is expected to continue to decline; and

WHEREAS, given that an unprecedented number of women are serving in the military and participating in Operation Enduring Freedom and Operation Iraqi Freedom, the U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) is working to provide consistent, comprehensive, and quality health care and benefits to women veterans of all eras; and

WHEREAS, the number of female veterans has increased over the last decade because there is an increasing number and proportion of women who are entering and leaving the military, women are living longer than men and have a younger age distribution compared to male veterans; and

WHEREAS, even though VA has been at the forefront of healthcare and lifestyle solutions affecting an aging male population, there is now a growing need to improve health care services for women veterans, ensure clinicians are properly trained to provide primary care and gender specific care to women of all ages, and identify innovative courses of treatment and solutions to obstacles that are unique to women veterans; and

WHEREAS, with a rapidly increasing number of women serving in the military today and returning from deployments as seasoned veterans, and some with exposure to combat, VA facilities and veterans service organizations are working to ensure that the post-deployment mental and physical health needs unique to women veterans are also met; and

WHEREAS, even though the roles of women in the military have changed over time and will continue to change, they deserve to be acknowledged for their military service and treated with equal respect; now

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED, that the state of North Dakota encourages the North Dakota Department of Veterans Affairs and its women veterans state coordinator to work in conjunction with the National Foundation for Women Legislators and the Center for Women Veterans at the U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs, to reach out to all women veterans within the state to encourage them to bring their specific needs and concerns to the attention of agency officials so that state legislators and agency officials may work together to identify unique issues impacting women veterans and consider policy solutions that will improve the quality of life for women veterans within the state; and

THEREFORE BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that the state of North Dakota formally honors all of the women in this state who have heroically answered their call to duty and recognize the important role women have played in shaping this great nation.

January 19, 2011

ND DVA
Attn: Brenda Bergsrud
Womens Veterans Coordinator
P.O. Box 7184
Bismarck ND 58507

To Whom It May Concern:

I am currently the National VFW Vice Chairperson for She Serves. I am a retired MSgt with 20 years of service in the Air Force and spent one tour in Iraq. I feel as a woman veteran that I have been taken care of but this doesn't happen to all female veterans and they need to know that there are programs out there to help them. They also need to realize that their service to this country is appreciated and their stories need to be told.

It is important for the state of North Dakota to recognize the month of March as Women Veteran's month. There are currently about 1.8 million women veterans. Many women are sent into combat and perform the same jobs as men. We need to be proud of our women in the military and recognize them as the heroes they are.

Sincerely,

Joy Mikyska

TESTIMONY ON HB 1167 - ND VETERANS COORDINATING COUNCIL.

A veteran is an individual that has signed a blank check in the amount of and up to including his or her life for their country. Good morning, my name is John L. Jacobsen. I am the Chairman of the Legislative Committee of the North Dakota Veterans Coordinating Council. I am also a member of the American Legion and the Veterans of Foreign Wars.

I served in the North Dakota National Guard and the US Army Reserve for a total of 30 years. I retired in 1995 as a Colonel. I was mobilized for Active Duty in 1991 during Operation Desert Shield/Desert Storm. Like all mobilizations, I left my home and family to serve in the Persian Gulf, stationed in the United Arab Emirates.

The Coordinating Council is made up of 15 members, 3 from each of the five Veterans Organizations in North Dakota:

- American Legion
- AMVETS
- Disabled American Veterans
- Veterans of Foreign Wars
- Vietnam Veterans of America

It is the policy of the Coordinating Council to support legislation that will benefit the welfare of the members of the Armed Forces. The committee MUST concur totally, that is all 15 members must agree on the legislation to be supported or else it does not get the support.

In this case, I have been instructed to recommend to this legislative committee that a "DO PASS" on HB 1167 is supported by the membership of the Veterans Coordinating Council.