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FISCAL IMPACT REPORT

SPONSOR Sapien **ORIGINAL DATE** 01/30/14
LAST UPDATED 01/31/14 **HB** _____

SHORT TITLE Military Honors for Veteran Funerals **SB** 202

ANALYST Esquibel

APPROPRIATION (dollars in thousands)

Appropriation		Recurring or Nonrecurring	Fund Affected
FY14	FY15		
	\$125.0	Recurring	General Fund

(Parenthesis () Indicate Expenditure Decreases)

Relates to Appropriation in the General Appropriation Act

SOURCES OF INFORMATION

LFC Files

Responses Received From
 Veterans' Services Department (VSD)

SUMMARY

Synopsis of Bill

Senate Bill 202 appropriates \$125 thousand from the general fund to the Veterans' Services Department (VSD) for military honors at the funerals of resident veterans.

FISCAL IMPLICATIONS

SB 202 includes a recurring appropriation of \$125 thousand in general fund revenue in FY15. Any unexpended or unencumbered balance remaining at the end of FY15 shall revert to the general fund.

The operating budget for VSD includes \$50 thousand for military honors at the funerals of veterans. The funds contained in SB 202 would increase the VSD's funding for military honor funerals to a total of \$175 thousand. This amount would be sufficient to provide military honors at the funerals of approximately 3,500 veterans at the current stipend rate of \$50.00.

If the stipend is raised to \$125.00 as proposed by VSD, the total funding of \$175 thousand with the \$125 thousand included in SB 202 along with the VSD's current operating budget of \$50

thousand for military honor funerals would be sufficient to provide military honors at the funerals of approximately 1,400 veterans.

The VSD Military Honors Program currently provides a \$50.00 stipend per funeral to statewide honor guard teams who provide military honors at veterans’ funerals. The \$50.00 stipend is used by the honor guard teams to travel to the funerals, and buy uniforms and equipment necessary to provide military honors. The honor guard teams are composed of volunteers who travel around the state to conduct military honors at veterans’ funerals including provision of a military flag folding ceremony, a 21 gun salute, and Taps.

SIGNIFICANT ISSUES

The Veterans’ Services Department has provided data indicating there are typically no more than 800 veterans’ funerals annually requiring military honors.

Fiscal Year	Total Expenditure (in thousands)	Number of Funerals
2010	\$38.1	761
2011	\$40.4	808
2012	\$37.3	746
2013	\$38.6	771

ADMINISTRATIVE IMPLICATIONS

VSD indicates the agency will provide the stipend through a payment voucher once it is determined that the honor guard team has registered with the state and provides VSD with the necessary supporting documentation.

RAE/ds:svb