

SENATE APPROPRIATIONS COMMITTEE FISCAL NOTE

BILL NO. Senate Bill 973

PRINTER NO. 1515

AMOUNT

See Fiscal Impact

FUND

General Fund

DATE INTRODUCED

October 31, 2023

PRIME SPONSOR

Senator Pennycuik

DESCRIPTION

Senate Bill 973 amends Title 51 (Military Affairs) to provide the same benefits and privileges of United States military veterans to certain Korean American citizens.

This legislation amends Title 51 by adding a new section 105 (relating to veteran of Korean Armed Forces) that provides for the following:

- 1) Any resident of this Commonwealth who is an eligible veteran of the Korean Armed Forces, a duly naturalized citizen of the United States and has been recognized by the United States Department of Veterans Affairs as a discharged member of allied forces shall be afforded the same rights, benefits, recognition and privileges afforded to veterans of the United States military;
- 2) Any appropriate Commonwealth agency or department may request supporting documentation to determine that an individual applying for benefits or recognition is an eligible veteran of the Korean Armed Forces. A request may include discharge or separation papers or other documents of proof to establish military service and documents from the United States Department of Veterans Affairs; and
- 3) Defines "eligible veteran of the Korean Armed Forces" as any member of the Republic of Korea Armed Forces who served on active duty in the Vietnam War between January 9, 1962, and May 7, 1975, and has been recognized by the United States Department of Veterans Affairs as a discharged member of allied forces.

This act shall take effect in 60 days.

FISCAL IMPACT:

According to data available from the Korean American Veterans of the Vietnam War non-profit organization, there are approximately 3,000 Korean Americans who served in the Vietnam War currently living in the United States. Approximately 400 Korean American veterans live in Pennsylvania and the northeast United States.

According to the Pennsylvania Department of Military and Veterans Affairs, any costs related to extending eligibility requirements for veteran programs to Korean American veterans will be minimal and capable of being accommodated within the department's current workload and budget.