

THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF PENNSYLVANIA

SENATE BILL

No. 146 Session of
2025

INTRODUCED BY BAKER, BROOKS, BARTOLOTTA, FONTANA, BROWN,
PENNYCUICK, COSTA, STEFANO AND ROBINSON, JANUARY 22, 2025

AS REPORTED FROM COMMITTEE ON VETERANS AFFAIRS AND EMERGENCY
PREPAREDNESS, HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES, AS AMENDED, OCTOBER
8, 2025

AN ACT

1 Amending Title 51 (Military Affairs) of the Pennsylvania
2 Consolidated Statutes, in State Veterans' Commission and
3 Deputy Adjutant General for Veterans' Affairs, further
4 providing for DEFINITIONS AND FOR Veterans' Trust Fund; and <--
5 establishing the Veterans' Trust Fund Board.

6 The General Assembly of the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania
7 hereby enacts as follows:

8 ~~Section 1. Section 1721(e) of Title 51 of the Pennsylvania~~ <--
9 ~~Consolidated Statutes is amended and the section is amended by~~
10 ~~adding a subsection to read:~~
11 ~~§ 1721. Veterans' Trust Fund.~~

12 * * *

13 SECTION 1. SECTION 1701 OF TITLE 51 OF THE PENNSYLVANIA <--
14 CONSOLIDATED STATUTES IS AMENDED BY ADDING DEFINITIONS TO READ:
15 § 1701. DEFINITIONS.

16 THE FOLLOWING WORDS AND PHRASES WHEN USED IN THIS CHAPTER
17 SHALL HAVE THE MEANINGS GIVEN TO THEM IN THIS SECTION UNLESS THE

CONTEXT CLEARLY INDICATES OTHERWISE:

"BOARD." THE VETERANS' TRUST FUND BOARD ESTABLISHED UNDER SECTION 1721(E) (RELATING TO VETERANS' TRUST FUND).

* * *

"FUND." THE VETERANS' TRUST FUND ESTABLISHED UNDER SECTION 1701-A.1 OF THE ACT OF APRIL 9, 1929 (P.L.343, NO.176), KNOWN AS THE FISCAL CODE.

SECTION 2. SECTION 1721(A) INTRODUCTORY PARAGRAPH, (C) INTRODUCTORY PARAGRAPH, (E) AND (F) OF TITLE 51 ARE AMENDED AND THE SECTION IS AMENDED BY ADDING A SUBSECTION TO READ:

§ 1721. VETERANS' TRUST FUND.

(A) SOURCE OF REVENUE.--IN ADDITION TO TRANSFERS UNDER SECTION 1719-G OF THE ACT OF APRIL 9, 1929 (P.L.343, NO.176), KNOWN AS THE FISCAL CODE, THE [VETERANS' TRUST FUND] FUND SHALL INCLUDE FUNDS FROM THE FOLLOWING SOURCES:

* * *

(C) AUTHORIZED PURPOSES.--THE DEPARTMENT MAY EXPEND MONEY FROM THE [VETERANS' TRUST FUND] FUND FOR THE FOLLOWING PURPOSES:

* * *

(e) Operation.--

(1) The department shall adopt a statement of policy for the maintenance and use of the fund within 60 days of the effective date of this section. The policy shall be published as a notice in the Pennsylvania Bulletin, but shall not be subject to review under section 205 of the act of July 31, 1968 (P.L.769, No.240), referred to as the Commonwealth Documents Law, sections 204(b) and 301(10) of the act of October 15, 1980 (P.L.950, No.164), known as the Commonwealth Attorneys Act or the act of June 25, 1982 (P.L.633, No.181), known as the Regulatory Review Act.

1 (2) The Veterans' Trust Fund Board is established as an
2 advisory board within the department. The following shall
3 apply:

4 (i) The purpose of the Veterans' Trust Fund Board <--
5 BOARD is to increase donations to ensure the effective <--
6 management and impactful distribution of THE FUND, <--
7 PROVIDE FOR THE EFFECTIVE MANAGEMENT OF THE FUND AND
8 EFFECTUATE AN EQUITABLE AND BROAD DISTRIBUTION OF money
9 in the Veterans' Trust Fund FUND. <--

10 (ii) The Veterans' Trust Fund Board BOARD shall have <--
11 the following duties:

12 (A) Advise the department on the priorities of
13 the Veterans' Trust Fund grants.

14 (B) Review Veterans' Trust Fund grant
15 applications.

16 (C) Raise public awareness of the Veterans' <--
17 Trust Fund FUND TO ENCOURAGE DONATIONS AND <--
18 ORGANIZATION PARTICIPATION.

19 (D) Recommend performance audit metrics for <--
20 REVIEW FUND AUDITS AND REPORTS AND RECOMMEND <--
21 PERFORMANCE AUDIT METRICS TO BE UTILIZED AND ◀
22 IMPLEMENTED BY organizations receiving Veterans'
23 Trust Fund grants.

24 (E) Recommend legislative or policy changes
25 NECESSARY to enhance the Veterans' Trust Fund FUND <--
26 AND THE DISTRIBUTION OF MONEY FROM THE FUND.

27 (F) Review audits and reports with the <--
28 department and the chairperson and minority
29 chairperson of the Veterans Affairs and Emergency
30 Preparedness Committee of the Senate and the

~~chairperson and minority chairperson of the Veterans
Affairs and Emergency Preparedness Committee of the
House of Representatives.~~

(II.1) THE DUTIES OF THE BOARD UNDER SUBPARAGRAPH
(II) RELATING TO GRANTS SHALL NOT APPLY TO FUNDS
DISTRIBUTED UNDER CHAPTER 85 (RELATING TO VETERANS'
TEMPORARY ASSISTANCE).

~~(iii) Members of the Veterans' Trust Fund Board
BOARD shall be veterans, family members of veterans and
OR individuals who have extensive experience in serving
veterans. In determining who to appoint to the Veterans'
Trust Fund Board BOARD, consideration shall be given to
subject matter experts in veterans issues regarding
behavioral health, mental health, posttraumatic stress
disorder injuries, physical disabilities, EMPLOYMENT,
housing or other social determinants of health. The
Veterans' Trust Fund Board BOARD shall consist of the
following:~~

(A) The Deputy Adjutant General for Veterans'
Affairs or a designee, who shall serve ex officio.

~~(B) Two members recommended by the Adjutant
General and appointed by the Governor.~~

(B) THE CHAIRPERSON AND MINORITY CHAIRPERSON OF
THE VETERANS AFFAIRS AND EMERGENCY PREPAREDNESS
COMMITTEE OF THE SENATE, OR THEIR DESIGNEES, WHO
SHALL SERVE EX OFFICIO AND IN AN ADVISORY ROLE.

(C) THE CHAIRPERSON AND MINORITY CHAIRPERSON OF
THE VETERANS AFFAIRS AND EMERGENCY PREPAREDNESS
COMMITTEE OF THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES, OR THEIR
DESIGNEES, WHO SHALL SERVE EX OFFICIO AND IN AN

1 ADVISORY ROLE.

2 ~~(C)~~ (D) Two members of the commission <--
3 recommended by the chairperson of the commission and
4 appointed by the Governor.

5 ~~(D)~~ (E) One member recommended by the Adjutant <--
6 General from each of the ~~five~~ PA VETConnect Program <--
7 regions, ~~the City of Philadelphia and the City of~~ <--
8 ~~Pittsburgh~~ OR ANY SUCCESSOR REGIONS and appointed by <--
9 the Governor.

10 (iv) Except as provided under this subparagraph,
11 members appointed by the Governor to the ~~Veterans' Trust~~ <--
12 ~~Fund Board~~ BOARD shall serve a term of four years and <--
13 until a successor has been appointed. The initial members
14 appointed by the Governor to the ~~Veterans' Trust Fund~~ <--
15 ~~Board~~ BOARD shall serve terms as follows as determined by <--
16 the Governor:

17 (A) Two members shall serve a term of one year.

18 (B) ~~Three~~ TWO members shall serve a term of two <--
19 years.

20 (C) ~~Three~~ TWO members shall serve a term of <--
21 three years.

22 (D) ~~Three members~~ ONE MEMBER shall serve a term <--
23 of four years.

24 (v) Upon recommendation from the Adjutant General,
25 the Governor may ~~declare a vacancy to exist if~~ REMOVE a <--
26 member appointed by the Governor to the ~~Veterans' Trust~~ <--
27 ~~Fund Board~~ BOARD IF THE MEMBER fails to attend three <--
28 consecutive meetings of the ~~Veterans' Trust Fund Board~~ <--
29 BOARD without good cause. The Governor shall fill a <--
30 ~~vacancy declared~~ THE VACANCY CREATED under this <--

subparagraph for the remainder of the unexpired term.

(vi) The Veterans' Trust Fund Board BOARD shall <--
annually elect a chairperson and vice chairperson at the
first meeting commencing no later than March 31, 2025- <--
2026. The department shall designate an executive <--
secretary to the Veterans' Trust Fund Board BOARD. <--

(vii) Members of the Veterans' Trust Fund Board <--
BOARD shall receive no compensation for their services <--
but shall receive reimbursement for their necessary and
proper expenses incurred in executing their duties as
members of the Veterans' Trust Fund Board BOARD. <--

(viii) The Veterans' Trust Fund Board BOARD shall <--
meet upon the call of the chairperson or the Deputy
Adjutant General of Veterans' Affairs. Six FOUR members <--
of the Veterans' Trust Fund Board BOARD shall constitute <--
a quorum.

(ix) Voting EXCEPT FOR THE DEPUTY ADJUTANT GENERAL <--
FOR VETERANS' AFFAIRS, members of the Veterans' Trust <--
Fund Board BOARD may not be current employees of the <--
department.

(x) If a member of the Veterans' Trust Fund Board <--
has an interest in an organization applying for a grant
from the Veterans' Trust Fund, the member shall refrain
from further discussion with the applicant and may not
make a recommendation regarding the approval or
disapproval of the application. If a member of the
Veterans' Trust Fund Board has a conflict of interest
with an organization applying for a grant from the
Veterans' Trust Fund, the member shall recuse oneself.

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1 (F) REPORT.--BY JULY 31, 2013, AND EVERY YEAR THEREAFTER, <--
2 THE DEPARTMENT SHALL SUBMIT TO THE CHAIRMAN AND MINORITY
3 CHAIRMAN OF THE VETERANS AFFAIRS AND EMERGENCY PREPAREDNESS
4 COMMITTEE OF THE SENATE AND THE CHAIRMAN AND MINORITY CHAIRMAN
5 OF THE VETERANS AFFAIRS AND EMERGENCY PREPAREDNESS COMMITTEE OF
6 THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES A REPORT DETAILING THE [VETERANS'
7 TRUST FUND] FUND REVENUES AND EXPENDITURES IN THE PRIOR FISCAL
8 YEAR AND DESCRIBING THE ACTIVITIES, PROGRAMS AND PROJECTS WHICH
9 RECEIVED FUNDS.

10 (g) Audit.--By July 31, 2026, and every ~~two~~ THREE years ◀
11 thereafter, the ~~department~~ AUDITOR GENERAL shall submit a <--
12 performance audit OF THE FUND to the chairperson and minority <--
13 chairperson of the Veterans Affairs and Emergency Preparedness
14 Committee of the Senate and the chairperson and minority
15 chairperson of the Veterans Affairs and Emergency Preparedness
16 Committee of the House of Representatives. The performance audit
17 shall be conducted in accordance with generally accepted
18 government auditing standards and examine the impacts on
19 veterans by organizations funded through the Veterans' Trust <--
20 Fund FUND. <--
21 Section 2 3. This act shall take effect in 60 days. <--