



General Assembly

February Session, 2026

Raised Bill No. 5415

LCO No. 2291



Referred to Committee on VETERANS' AND MILITARY AFFAIRS

Introduced by:
(VA)

AN ACT ESTABLISHING A VETERANS' HEALTH CARE OMBUDSMAN FOR THE COORDINATION AND OVERSIGHT OF STATE AND LOCAL RESOURCES IN NAVIGATING FEDERAL VETERANS' HEALTH CARE BENEFITS.

Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives in General Assembly convened:

1 Section 1. (NEW) (*Effective October 1, 2026*) (a) There is established an
2 Office of the Veterans' Health Care Ombudsman, which shall be within
3 the Office of Governmental Accountability, established under section 1-
4 300 of the general statutes, for administrative purposes only to (1)
5 coordinate with various resources, including, but not limited to,
6 veterans' service officers and municipal veterans representatives, in
7 assisting veterans eligible to receive health care through the United
8 States Department of Veterans Affairs, and caregivers of such veterans,
9 with navigating the health care system administered by said federal
10 department, and (2) advocate for increased coordination among such
11 various resources when deficiencies in such coordination are identified.
12 The Governor shall appoint a Veterans' Health Care Ombudsman who
13 shall be selected from among individuals with expertise and experience
14 in a field concerning veterans' health care to head the office.

15 (b) The Office of the Veterans' Health Care Ombudsman shall:

16 (1) Receive, review and attempt to resolve any complaints from
17 eligible veterans and caregivers described in subsection (a) of this
18 section regarding obstacles to applying for or receiving health care
19 through the United States Department of Veterans Affairs, including,
20 but not limited to, difficulties in accessing assistance from existing state
21 and municipal resources;

22 (2) Compile and analyze data on complaints described in subdivision
23 (1) of this subsection;

24 (3) Assist such eligible veterans and caregivers in understanding their
25 rights and responsibilities in relation to the health care system
26 administered by the United States Department of Veterans Affairs;

27 (4) Provide information to the public, agencies, legislators and others
28 regarding the problems and concerns of such eligible veterans and
29 caregivers and make recommendations for resolving those problems
30 and concerns;

31 (5) Analyze and monitor the development and implementation of
32 federal laws, regulations and policies relating to the health care system
33 administered by the United States Department of Veterans Affairs and
34 recommend any changes the Veterans' Health Care Ombudsman deems
35 necessary;

36 (6) Disseminate information concerning the availability of the Office
37 of the Veterans' Health Care Ombudsman to assist such veterans and
38 caregivers with any veterans' health care concerns; and

39 (7) Take any other actions necessary to fulfill the duties of the Office
40 of the Veterans' Health Care Ombudsman and the Veterans' Health Care
41 Ombudsman as set forth in this subsection.

42 (c) On or before October 1, 2027, the Veterans' Health Care
43 Ombudsman, in consultation with the Commissioner of Veterans

44 Affairs, shall, within available appropriations, establish and maintain a
45 veterans' health care education course that shall include educational
46 presentations and materials regarding the health care system
47 administered by the United States Department of Veterans Affairs and
48 state and local resources available to veterans and caregivers described
49 in subsection (a) of this section in navigating such system.

50 (d) On or before January 1, 2028, and annually thereafter, the
51 Veterans' Health Care Ombudsman shall submit a report, in accordance
52 with the provisions of section 11-4a of the general statutes, to the joint
53 standing committee of the General Assembly having cognizance of
54 matters relating to veterans' and military affairs, on (1) the
55 implementation of this section, and (2) recommendations for legislation
56 to improve such implementation.

This act shall take effect as follows and shall amend the following sections:		
Section 1	<i>October 1, 2026</i>	New section

Statement of Purpose:
To establish a Veterans' Health Care Ombudsman for the coordination and oversight of state and local resources in navigating the health care system administered by the United States Department of Veterans Affairs.

[Proposed deletions are enclosed in brackets. Proposed additions are indicated by underline, except that when the entire text of a bill or resolution or a section of a bill or resolution is new, it is not underlined.]