

# HOUSE RESEARCH

## Bill Summary

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**Subject:** Military, Support our Troops Account

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### Overview

This bill broadens the definition of an *eligible individual* who is authorized to receive a grant from the state's Support our Troops account, which is funded by one-half of the revenues from the sale of the special *Support our Troops* motor vehicle license plates (which is supplemented by private donations). Under the 2005 enabling legislation, the Minnesota National Guard is charged with managing that account.

Under current law, a grant of up to \$2,000 in any year may be given to an *eligible individual*, who is defined as any Minnesota resident serving in regular active military duty, and any member of a National Guard or Reserve unit based in Minnesota who is serving in any active military service, as well as a member of the service member's immediate family.

The bill would extend the definition of *eligible individual* to include any person described above who has previously served in such active military service, but who is no longer serving actively, provided that the person has a current financial need directly related to that active military service.

Note: Under current law, *active military service* is broadly defined as including:

- *federal active service (under Title 10)*, for regular active military duty; service in support of contingency operations in Iraq and Afghanistan; and so on;

- *federally-funded state active service (under Title 32)*, for in-state and out-of-state training, Mexican border patrol, and so on; and
- *state active service* , as ordered by the Governor for natural disasters; missing persons; insurrections; and so on.

Generally, a service member *does not* become a *veteran*, until having served in *federal active service* under Title 10 for purposes other than training for a period of over 180 days, unless the person has been medically discharged as a result of military service. Under the grant program that is the subject of this bill, not all service members or former service members who are *eligible individuals* are *veterans*.