

**VETERANS AND MILITARY AFFAIRS FINANCE AND POLICY COMMITTEE  
MINUTES**

Representative Jerry Newton, Chair of the Veterans and Military Affairs Finance and Policy Committee, called the meeting to order at 1:00 P.M., on March 18, 2024, in Room 5 of the State Office Building.

The Committee Legislative Assistant noted the roll.

**Members present:**

NEWTON, Jerry, Chair  
ELKINS, Steve, Vice-Chair  
BLISS, Matt, Minority Lead  
BENNETT, Peggy  
COULTER, Nathan  
GREENMAN, Emma  
HUDELLA, Shane  
LISLEGARD, Dave  
NORRIS, Matt  
OLSON, Bjorn  
WIENS, Mark

**Members Excused:**

CLARDY, Mary Frances

A quorum was present.

Representative Bliss moved that the minutes from March 11, 2023, be approved. THE MOTION PREVAILED.

HF837 (Garafalo); State veterans cemetery burial fee removed for spouses and dependents of eligible veterans.

Chair Newton moved that HF837 be laid over for possible inclusion in the Veterans and Military Affairs Finance and Policy Committee omnibus bill.

Chair Newton moved to adopt the A4 amendment. THE MOTION PREVAILED. THE AMENDMENT WAS ADOPTED.

Chair Newton presented HF837, as amended.

Testifying on the bill:

- Ben Johnson, Minnesota Department of Veterans' Affairs (MDVA)

Chair Newton renewed the motion that HF837, as amended, be laid over for possible inclusion in the Veterans and Military Affairs Finance and Policy Committee omnibus bill. The bill was laid over.

HF1666 (Hudella) - Veteran service officers authorized to receive vital records without a fee.

Representative Hudella moved that HF1666 be recommended to be placed on the General Register.

Representative Hudella presented HF1666.

Representative Hudella renewed the motion that HF1666 be recommended to be placed on the General Register. THE MOTION PREVAILED.

HF4769 (Hudella) - Commissioner of veterans affairs funding provided for Eagle's Healing Nest grant, and money appropriated.

Representative Hudella moved that HF4769 be laid over for possible inclusion in the Veterans and Military Affairs Finance and Policy Committee omnibus bill.

Representative Hudella presented HF4769.

Testifying on the bill:

- Ben Johnson, MDVA
- Shawn Kor, Retired Army Command Sergeant Major, Executive Director Eagle's Healing Nest
- Kim Wixon, Board Member, Eagle's Healing Nest
- Dylan Turk, Program Beneficiary, Eagle's Healing Nest

Representative Hudella renewed the motion that HF4769 be laid over for possible inclusion in the Veterans and Military Affairs Finance and Policy Committee omnibus bill. The bill was laid over.

HF3677 (Elkins) - Counties authorized to appropriate money to organizations to defray expenses of Veterans Day exercises.

Representative Elkins moved that HF3677 be recommended to be placed on the General Register.

Representative Elkins moved to adopt the DE1 amendment. THE MOTION PREVAILED. THE AMENDMENT WAS ADOPTED.

Representative Elkins presented HF3677, as amended.

Testifying on the bill:

- John Baker, Executive Director, Minnesota Association of County Veteran Service Officers (MACVSO)
- Representative Joe Schomacker, Minnesota House of Representatives
- Ben Johnson, MDVA

Representative Elkins renewed the motion that HF3677, as amended, is recommended to be placed on the General Register. THE MOTION PREVAILED.

HF4742 (Rehm) - University of Minnesota landscape Arboretum requested to provide free access to disabled veterans.

Representative Rehm moved that HF4742 be recommended to be placed on the General Register.

Representative Rehm presented HF4742.

Testifiers:

- Kristy Janigo, Chairperson, American Legion

Representative Rehm renewed the motion that HF4742 be recommended to be placed on the General Register. THE MOTION PREVAILED.

HF4038 (Wiens) - Property tax exemption provided for land owned by congressionally chartered veterans' service organizations special classification removed for land owned by congressionally chartered veterans service organizations.

Representative Wiens moves that HF4038 be referred to the House Committee on Taxes.

Representative Wiens presented HF4038.

Testifiers:

- Kristy Janigo,
- Dick Ward
- John White

Representative Wiens renewed the motion that HF4038 be referred to the Taxes Committee. THE MOTION PREVAILED.

HF4134 (Wiens) - Veteran designation on drivers' licenses or Minnesota identification cards and burial in state veterans' cemeteries eligibility amended, and money appropriated.

Representative Wiens moves that HF4134 be referred to the House Committee Transportation Finance and Policy.

Representative Wiens moved to adopt the A1 amendment. THE MOTION PREVAILED. THE AMENDMENT WAS ADOPTED.

Representative Wiens presented HF4134, as amended.

Testifiers:

- Ben Johnson, MDVA

Representative Wiens renewed the motion that HF4134 be referred, as amended, to the House Committee Transportation Finance and Policy. THE MOTION PREVAILED.

HF4976 (Wiens) - Tuition-free postsecondary educational program for veterans who have received Purple Heart and the veterans' dependents established, and money appropriated.

Representative Wiens moved that HF4976 be referred to the House Committee on Higher Education Finance and Policy.

Representative Wiens presented HF4976.

Testifiers:

- Ryan Sabinish, Purple Heart Recipient

Representative Wiens renewed the motion that HF4976 be referred to the House Committee on Higher Education Finance and Policy. THE MOTION PREVAILED.

HF3454 (Norris) - Adjutant general authorized to establish referral bonus program for referrals leading to enlistment in or commissioning into the Minnesota National Guard.

Representative Norris moved that HF3454 be recommended to be placed on the General Register.

Representative Norris moved the DE2 amendment. THE MOTION PREVAILED. THE AMENDMENT WAS ADOPTED.

Representative Norris presented HF3454, as amended.

Representative Norris renewed the motion that HF3454, as amended, be recommended to be placed on the General Register. THE MOTION PREVAILED.

HF4334 (Olson, B.) - Making a veteran, former service member, or their spouse/dependent not eligible for state-funded benefits, services, or programs if the veteran or former service member has forfeited federal benefits.

Representative Olson, B. moved that HF4334 be recommended to be placed on the General Register.

Rep Olson, B moved the DE2 amendment. THE MOTION PREVAILED. THE AMENDMENT WAS ADOPTED.

Representative Olson, B presented HF4334, as amended.

Representative Olson, B. renewed the motion that HF4334, as amended, be recommended to be placed on the General Register. THE MOTION PREVAILED.

The meeting was adjourned at 1:58 P.M.

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Representative Jerry Newton, Chair

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Robin Schmidt, Committee Legislative Assistant