Overview

This bill broadens the scope of the "agent orange" information and assistance program being administered by the Department of Veterans Affairs by renaming it the "environmental hazards" information and assistance program. It also broadens the time frame for eligibility by striking language limiting the program to "Vietnam era veterans." The bill also clarifies certain duties of the commissioner of the department.

Section

& 22 Strikes archaic language regarding duties of the commissioner of the Minnesota Department of Veterans Affairs (MDVA) to conform law to current practice. Strikes reference to M.S. § 198, the Veterans Home(s) chapter, since veterans homes are no longer the responsibility of the MDVA.

to 1212 Renames the "Agent Orange Program" as the "Environmental Hazards Program." These sections of the bill effectively broaden the scope of the program with regard to both the time frame for eligibility and types of chemical and other harmful exposure.

The time frame is broadened by striking language referring to "Vietnam era veterans" and inserting language referring to "time of war or peace and whether domestically or abroad" (in section 4).

Additional language broadens the relevant "chemical agents" from "dioxin" (only) to "agent orange or any other identified or unidentified chemical substance or compounds suspected by medical experts of adversely affecting the physical, mental, or emotional health of members of the armed forces" (in section 6).

to 1515 Clarifies that the State Soldiers Assistance Fund applies to dependents of veterans, as well as to veterans, and that the assistance applies to "optical, dental, or other emergency medical needs. This conforms statutory language to current practice. These sections also strike or amend archaic language and statutory references.
Repealer. Repeals archaic sections of law.