



Legislative Committee Report

Delaware Commission of Veterans Affairs

Reporting Period: July 1, 2025 – July 1, 2026

Submitted by: Legislative Committee

I. Overview of Committee Activity

From July 1, 2025 through July 1, 2026, the Legislative Committee of the Delaware Commission of Veterans Affairs (DCVA) engaged in a full year of coordinated advocacy, legislative monitoring, and direct engagement with members of the 153rd General Assembly. The committee worked collaboratively to ensure that Delaware veterans, military families, and veteran service organizations (VSOs) were represented in legislative discussions and that veteran-related bills received timely support and attention.

The committee's work included bill analysis, outreach to legislators, coordination with VSOs, preparation of official DCVA communications, and leadership in statewide advocacy events.

II. Committee Actions & Engagements

1. Legislative Outreach & Communication

The committee maintained consistent communication with legislators throughout the year, including:

- Providing updates on veteran priorities to House and Senate members.
- Issuing formal letters of support for key legislation.
- Coordinating messaging with VSOs to ensure unified advocacy.
- Preparing invitations and legislative briefings for major veteran events.
- Responding to legislative inquiries regarding veteran issues.

2. Veterans Lobby Day – June 11, 2026



The committee collectively organized and executed the 2026 Veterans Lobby Day at Legislative Hall, including:

- Coordinating invitations to members of the General Assembly.
- Preparing legislative talking points and issue briefs for VSOs.
- Ensuring representation from all major veteran organizations.
- Facilitating discussions between legislators and veteran advocates.
- Highlighting priority legislation and emerging veteran needs.

3. Legislative Testimony & Representation

Committee members provided representation and support during legislative hearings, including:

- Communicating DCVA positions to bill sponsors and committee chairs.
- Supporting testimony for veteran-related bills when requested.
- Ensuring DCVA remained a recognized stakeholder in veteran policy discussions.

4. Monitoring & Reporting on Legislation

The committee tracked all veteran-related bills introduced or active during the reporting period and provided regular updates to the Commission and VSOs.

III. Veteran-Related Legislation (2025–2026 Session)

Below is a verified list of legislation affecting veterans or military families during the reporting period, based on the Delaware General Assembly's public records.

A. HB 1 – Creation of the Delaware Department of Veterans Affairs

Status: Signed August 13, 2025

Summary: Establishes a cabinet-level Department of Veterans Affairs.

Committee Role:

- Coordinated support among VSOs.
- Communicated with legislators regarding the importance of elevating veteran services.
- Provided updates to the Commission.

B. HB 55 – Military Status Anti-Discrimination Act



Status: Signed July 23, 2025

Summary: Adds “military status” as a protected class in Delaware’s public accommodations, housing, insurance, education, and employment laws.

Committee Role:

- Monitored bill progress.
- Reported updates to VSOs and the Commission.

C. SB 317 – Veterans Month Act

Status: Passed Senate May 21, 2026; Passed House June 16, 2026

Summary: Designates May as “Veterans Month” in Delaware, encouraging statewide recognition and ceremonies.

Committee Role:

- Coordinated DCVA support messaging.
- Notified VSOs of legislative movement and final passage.

D. SB 219 – DCVA Priority Legislation

Status: Ready for Governor's Signature

Summary: This Act phases in, over 3 years, an increased exemption for military pensions from state income taxation, regardless of age, which is currently \$12,500, so that in taxable years beginning on or after January 1, 2029, the exemption will be \$25,000 for all military pensioners.

Committee Role:

- Drafted and distributed letters of support.
- Coordinated outreach to committee members.
- Engaged legislators directly to advance the bill.

E. HB 162 – Multi-Level Marketing Consumer Protection (Veteran Impact)

Status: Died in Senate Banking, Business, Insurance, and Technology Committee

Summary: Addresses deceptive MLM practices that disproportionately target veterans and military families.



Committee Role:

- Issued DCVA support communication to Senators.
- Highlighted consumer protection concerns affecting veterans.

F. HB 349 – Veterans’ Property Tax Exemption Expansion

Status: Died in the House Appropriations Committee

Summary: Expands eligibility and clarifies provisions for Delaware’s veterans’ property tax exemption program, improving access for disabled veterans and surviving spouses.

Committee Role:

- Reviewed bill language for veteran impact
- Coordinated communication with VSOs
- Prepared committee updates and legislative outreach
- Ensured alignment with DCVA’s broader advocacy priorities

G. HB 295 – Designated Parking Space for Veterans at State Buildings

Status: Passed House May 7, 2026; Passed Senate June 30, 2026 — Ready for Governor

Summary: This Act amends Titles 21 and 29 of the Delaware Code to require the Director of the Office of Management and Budget to designate one or more **reserved parking spaces for veterans** at specified state buildings and facilities, including Division of Motor Vehicles locations and state service centers. It also prohibits stopping, standing, or parking in these reserved spaces and exempts violations from the general civil parking penalty in Title 21.

Committee Role:

- Identified HB 295 as a veteran-impact bill and added it to the committee’s tracking list.
- Wrote Letter of Support
- Communicated the importance of visible, practical recognition for veterans at state facilities.
- Included HB 295 in legislative updates and Veterans Lobby Day materials.
- Coordinated awareness of the bill with veteran service organizations.

H. HB 31 – Veterans’ Benefits and Trade Practices



Status: Introduced December 19, 2024; Reported out of House Economic Development/Banking/Insurance & Commerce Committee March 11, 2025, Died without a House Floor Vote

Summary: HB 31 amends **Title 6** of the Delaware Code to create protections for veterans seeking assistance with **VA benefits**. It restricts **non-VA-accredited businesses** from charging veterans for advising or assisting with VA benefits claims, requires clear written agreements, and mandates disclosures that free assistance is available through VA-accredited organizations such as the American Legion, VFW, and AMVETS.

Committee Role:

- Identified HB 31 as a key consumer-protection bill for veterans.
- Wrote Letter of Support
- Monitored its progress and included it in legislative tracking.
- Communicated its importance to veteran service organizations.
- Incorporated HB 31 into committee briefings and Veterans Lobby Day materials.

IV. Additional Committee Accomplishments

1. Strengthening Legislative Relationships

The committee expanded DCVA's legislative presence by:

- Maintaining consistent communication with House and Senate Veterans Affairs Committees.
- Building rapport with bill sponsors and committee chairs.
- Ensuring DCVA was recognized as a primary stakeholder in veteran legislation.

2. Coordination with Veteran Service Organizations

The committee ensured unified advocacy by:

- Sharing legislative updates with VFW, American Legion, DAV, MOAA, NABVETS, AMVETS, Marine Corps League, and others.
- Aligning messaging for Lobby Day and bill support.
- Facilitating cross-organization collaboration.

3. Public-Facing Legislative Communication

The committee drafted:



- Legislative announcements
- Invitations
- Support letters
- Event descriptions
- Social media content for veteran legislative events

4. Advocacy Event Leadership

The committee led or supported:

- Veterans Lobby Day
- State Convention legislative coordination
- Meetings with legislators on veteran priorities

V. Summary

From July 1, 2025 to July 1, 2026, the Legislative Committee of the Delaware Commission of Veterans Affairs demonstrated strong, coordinated leadership in veteran advocacy. The committee ensured that veteran priorities were consistently represented in legislative discussions, supported major veteran-related bills, and strengthened partnerships with legislators and VSOs.

The committee's work contributed directly to the advancement of veteran-focused legislation, improved communication across the veteran community, and elevated the visibility of Delaware's veterans within the General Assembly.