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## **S.F. No. 4429 – Veterans Policy Omnibus (HF3454 1<sup>st</sup> Unofficial Engrossment)**

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This summarizes the Veterans Omnibus bill as it passed off the senate floor.

**Section 1 (13.02, subd 3a)** modifies the definition of the term “criminal justice agencies” in the Data Practices Act to include the Minnesota National Guard.

**Section 2 (13.785)** amends the data practices act stating that access to data on a service member of the military forces by the adjutant general is governed by **section 7**.

**Sections 3 and 4** modify the military forces chapter of the law.

**Section 3 (190.16, subd 3)** adds language stating that the adjutant general is the contracting authority for any construction or improvement program or project, and any other program or project funded by the federal government.

**Section 4 (190.16, subd 6a)** authorizes the adjutant general to rent facilities of the Minnesota National Guard. Current law limits rental to Camp Ripley.

**Section 5 (192.25)** amends the National Guard chapter of law. This section adds a new subdivision that contains similar language to the language stricken in **section 7**, which provides that when probable cause exists that a criminal offense has been committed by an officer or enlisted member of the military forces while on duty, the officer or enlisted member *may*, instead of *shall*, be turned over by superior officers to the proper local authorities.

**Section 6 (192.501, subd 1e)** amends the National Guard chapter of law, specifically financial incentives for National Guard members. This section allows the adjutant general to establish a program to provide a bonus for referrals leading to enlistment in or commissioning into the Minnesota National Guard and allows the adjutant general to determine eligibility for the program.

If a bonus was paid in error, the adjutant general may recoup the bonus. This section also imposes requirements on the adjutant general if a referral bonus program is implemented.

**Section 7 (192.67)** strikes the language moved to **section 5** and adds that all confidential data and private data as defined in the data practices act pertaining to any service member must be made accessible to the adjutant general.

**Sections 8 to 15** amend the Armories Chapter of law.

**Section 8 (193.143)** expands the authority of the Minnesota State Armory Building Commission established in 1947, to use funds for “other reasonable and necessary obligations” related to the armories under its control.

**Section 9 (193.29, subd 1)** authorizes the adjutant general to delegate authority for the control, operation, and use of each armory building to an armory board. Current law vests the authority to control, operate, and use each armory with an armory board.

**Section 10 (193.29, subd 4)** provides that the adjutant general determines the terms and conditions under which armories are rented. Under current law, the board determines the terms and conditions.

**Section 11 (193.36, subd 2)** allows the adjutant general to consider local government contributions, such as land donations and the provision of utilities, in addition to money, when selling or conveying property to a local government.

**Section 12 (193.36, subd 2a)** adds a new subdivision allowing the adjutant general to sell property to a municipality at a price to be determined by the adjutant general under certain circumstances, as provided in this section. The property must remain in public use by the municipality for at least 25 years.

**Section 13 (193.36, subd 2b)** adds a new subdivision authorizing the adjutant general to exchange property, with the approval of the Land Exchange Board, without regard for value when the adjutant general finds it advantageous for military training, operations, or reduction of management costs.

**Section 14 (193.36, subd 3)** requires that money received from the sale of armories that are unsuitable for military purposes or condemned be credited to the maintenance appropriation of the Department of Military Affairs or the Minnesota State Armory Building Commission, as determined by the adjutant general, instead of the general fund.

**Section 15 (193.36, subd 4)** adds a new subdivision requiring that the net proceeds from state bond financed property that is sold be applied as required by the Department of Management and Budget.

**Section 16 (197.63, subd 1)** allows a county veteran service officer to obtain the records of a veteran at no charge. The county veteran service officers are appointed by the county board and serve as advocates to help veterans and their families apply for benefits for which the veteran is eligible.

**Section 17 (198.005)** strikes the obsolete requirement that the administrator of a veterans home report directly to the commissioner of veterans affairs, as the administrator reports directly to the deputy commissioner for veteran health care.

**Section 18 (198.006)** authorizes the commissioner of veterans affairs to operate a central pharmacy to provide veterans home residents with pharmaceuticals prescribed as part of their care plan, and allows the commissioner to engage with the United States Department of Veterans Affairs to support the central pharmacy.

**Sections 19 and 20 (375.34 and 375.35)** lift the cap on the amount of funds the county may appropriate for Memorial Day exercises done by the county and at posts, respectively. These sections also expand this authority to Veterans Day exercises.

**Section 21 (609.396)** amends the criminal code, specifically the section related to crimes against the government, to expand the law imposing a misdemeanor for unlawful entry or presence in any campground, military reservation, armory, installation, or facility owned or controlled by the state or federal government for military purposes. This section also expands the felony under this section to all military facilities. The misdemeanor and felony penalties under current law only apply to the Camp Ripley Military Reservation.

**Section 22** modifies a session law to allow the commissioner to plan for the new veterans cemetery in northwest Minnesota.

**Section 23** extends the availability of a grant for the metro meals on wheels program for veterans.

**Section 24** allows the veterans home appropriation in fiscal year 2025 to be used in 2024 if the amount in 2024 is insufficient.