

LEGISLATURE OF NEBRASKA  
ONE HUNDRED FOURTH LEGISLATURE  
SECOND SESSION

**LEGISLATIVE BILL 754**

Introduced by Crawford, 45; Craighead, 6; Garrett, 3; Hansen, 26; Krist,  
10; Morfeld, 46.

Read first time January 06, 2016

Committee: Government, Military and Veterans Affairs

- 1 A BILL FOR AN ACT relating to the military; to create the Commission on
- 2 Military and Veteran Affairs; to provide for membership, terms,
- 3 duties, expenses, and staff; and to require a report.
- 4 Be it enacted by the people of the State of Nebraska,

1           Section 1. (1) The Commission on Military and Veteran Affairs is  
2 created. The commission shall consist of the following voting members:

3           (a) The Director of Economic Development;

4           (b) The Adjutant General or his or her designee;

5           (c) The Director of Veterans' Affairs; and

6           (d) Three residents of the State of Nebraska, one from each  
7 congressional district with terms as provided in subsection (3) of this  
8 section, appointed by the Governor. At least one of the three residents  
9 shall have current or prior military experience and at least one shall  
10 have a background in business.

11           (2) The commission shall have the following nonvoting, ex officio  
12 members:

13           (a) The Governor or his or her designee;

14           (b) The Attorney General or his or her designee;

15           (c) The Chief Justice of the Supreme Court or his or her designee;

16           (d) The Commissioner of Labor;

17           (e) The Director-State Engineer;

18           (f) The Commissioner of Education;

19           (g) The executive director of the Coordinating Commission for  
20 Postsecondary Education;

21           (h) The chief executive officer of the Department of Health and  
22 Human Services;

23           (i) The chairperson of the Government, Military and Veterans Affairs  
24 Committee of the Legislature;

25           (j) The chairperson of the Appropriations Committee of the  
26 Legislature;

27           (k) Three at-large members of the Legislature appointed by the  
28 Executive Board of the Legislative Council;

29           (l) The chair of the State Committee of Employer Support of the  
30 Guard and Reserve;

31           (m) The commander or his or her designee of the 55th Wing of the Air

1 Combat Command;

2 (n) The commander or his or her designee of the United States  
3 Strategic Command;

4 (o) The commander or his or her designee of the 557th Weather Wing  
5 of the United States Air Force; and

6 (p) Any resident of Nebraska designated as a Civilian Aide to the  
7 Secretary of the Army.

8 (3) The members of the commission described in subdivision (1)(d) of  
9 this section shall be appointed by the Governor and subject to the  
10 approval of a majority of the members of the Legislature if the  
11 Legislature is in session. If the Legislature is not in session, any  
12 appointment shall be temporary until the next session of the Legislature,  
13 at which time a majority of the members of the Legislature may approve or  
14 disapprove such appointment. The Governor shall designate the terms of  
15 the members described in subdivision (1)(d) of this section so that one  
16 member serves for a term of two years, one member serves for a term of  
17 four years, and one member serves for a term of six years. Succeeding  
18 appointments shall be for terms of six years in the same manner as the  
19 original appointments. The terms of the members shall begin on October 1  
20 of the year in which they are appointed unless appointed to fill a  
21 vacancy. Appointments to fill a vacancy, occurring other than by the  
22 expiration of a term of office, shall be made for the unexpired term of  
23 the member whose office is vacated.

24 Sec. 2. The Commission on Military and Veteran Affairs shall have  
25 the authority to receive and administer funds from state, federal, and  
26 other sources. Additionally, the commission shall:

27 (1) Address matters of military significance to Nebraska;

28 (2) Maintain a cooperative and constructive relationship between  
29 state agencies and the military and veteran entities in Nebraska as  
30 necessary to ensure coordination and implementation of unified and  
31 comprehensive statewide strategies involved with, or affected by, the

1 military;

2 (3) Focus on and, when designated, serve as lead agency on:

3 (a) Defense economic adjustment and transition information and  
4 activities;

5 (b) Exploring operating costs, missions, and strategic value of  
6 federal military installations located in the state;

7 (c) Employment issues for communities that depend on defense bases  
8 and defense-related businesses; and

9 (d) Assistance provided to communities that have experienced a  
10 defense-related closure or realignment;

11 (4) Advise the Governor, the Legislature, the Nebraska congressional  
12 delegation, and other appropriate governmental officials on all matters  
13 in which the military services and the state have mutual interests,  
14 needs, and concerns;

15 (5) Promote and optimize state and United States Department of  
16 Defense initiatives that will improve the military value of the Nebraska  
17 National Guard, active and reserve military force structure and  
18 installations, and the quality of life for military personnel residing in  
19 Nebraska;

20 (6) Partner with the Department of Economic Development and local  
21 communities to conduct ongoing analyses of current and proposed changes  
22 to the mission, military force structure, and alignment of the United  
23 States Department of Defense;

24 (7) Recommend state, federal, and local economic development  
25 projects to promote, foster, and support economic progress through a  
26 military presence in Nebraska;

27 (8) Promote and assist the private sector in developing derivative  
28 investments, employment, and educational opportunities associated with  
29 high technology programs and activities at Nebraska's military  
30 installations;

31 (9) Partner with the Department of Economic Development and local

1 communities to develop methods to improve private and public employment  
2 opportunities for former members of the military and their families  
3 residing in this state; and

4 (10) Identify and support ways to provide sound infrastructure,  
5 adequate housing, education, and transition support into Nebraska's  
6 workforce for military members and their families, retired military  
7 personnel, and veterans.

8 Sec. 3. (1) The Commission on Military and Veteran Affairs shall  
9 organize by establishing an executive committee consisting of the voting  
10 members of the commission. The executive committee shall elect a  
11 chairperson, vice-chairperson, and secretary from among its members. The  
12 vice-chairperson shall act as chairperson in the absence of the  
13 chairperson or in the event of a vacancy in that position. The secretary  
14 shall keep all records of meetings and actions taken by the commission.

15 (2) For executive committee meetings, four members, including either  
16 the chairperson or vice-chairperson, shall constitute a quorum, and the  
17 concurrence of four members of the executive committee shall be required  
18 for any action or recommendation.

19 (3) The executive committee shall meet two times each year at such  
20 times and places as shall be determined by the chairperson and shall keep  
21 a record of its proceedings. The chairperson may call special meetings  
22 and shall call special meetings upon receipt of a written request signed  
23 by four or more members of the executive committee. The secretary shall  
24 mail written notice of the time and place of all executive committee  
25 meetings in advance to each voting and nonvoting, ex officio member of  
26 the commission.

27 (4) The commission shall host an annual meeting at such time and  
28 place as determined by the executive committee. The focus of the annual  
29 meeting shall be to ensure all nonvoting, ex officio members are updated  
30 on activities of the commission and to conduct other business as  
31 determined by the chair with input from the Governor. The secretary shall

1 mail written notice of the time and place of the annual meeting in  
2 advance to each voting and nonvoting, ex officio member of the  
3 commission.

4 (5) The executive committee may establish committees or work groups  
5 comprised of commission members and citizens as necessary to advise the  
6 commission in carrying out its responsibilities and duties. A citizen who  
7 is not otherwise a voting member of the commission shall not have a vote  
8 on any action or recommendation from a committee or work group.

9 (6) The executive committee shall serve as the search committee for  
10 the executive director of the commission.

11 Sec. 4. (1) Except as provided in subsection (2) of this section,  
12 members of the Commission on Military and Veteran Affairs shall receive  
13 no compensation for their services as members of the commission other  
14 than their salary, but shall be reimbursed for actual and necessary  
15 expenses.

16 (2) The members of the commission described in subdivision (1)(d) of  
17 section 1 of this act shall be paid a per diem of fifty dollars for each  
18 day actually and necessarily engaged in the performance of their services  
19 as members of the commission and shall be reimbursed for actual and  
20 necessary expenses.

21 (3) Reimbursement for expenses shall be as provided in sections  
22 81-1174 to 81-1177.

23 Sec. 5. (1) The Commission on Military and Veteran Affairs shall  
24 employ an executive director and fix his or her salary. The executive  
25 director shall be a resident of this state for the past five years and  
26 have current or prior military experience. The commission shall provide  
27 office space for the executive director. The Department of Economic  
28 Development shall provide administrative support and staff to the  
29 executive director as needed. The executive director shall serve at the  
30 pleasure of the commission and shall be the administrative head and chief  
31 executive officer of the commission.

1       (2) The executive director shall be appointed by a majority of the  
2 executive committee.

3       (3) The executive director shall be responsible for the  
4 administrative operations of the commission and shall perform such other  
5 duties as may be delegated or assigned to him or her by the executive  
6 committee. This includes the authority to contract for services, expend  
7 funds, and operate the normal business activities of the commission. The  
8 executive director shall also staff the meetings of the commission.

9       (4) The commission may obtain the services of experts and  
10 consultants as necessary to carry out its duties. Employees of the  
11 commission shall be exempted from the provisions of Chapter 81, article  
12 13, except that they may be covered by the State Personnel System through  
13 specific agreement between the commission and the personnel division of  
14 the Department of Administrative Services.

15       Sec. 6. The Commission on Military and Veteran Affairs shall  
16 prepare an annual report summarizing the military assets of Nebraska,  
17 including installations and missions, and the economic impact of the  
18 military assets in Nebraska. The report shall also include  
19 recommendations for preserving and sustaining military assets and  
20 missions existing in Nebraska and recommendations for actions which the  
21 state can take to encourage expanding such assets and missions. The  
22 commission shall submit the report to the Legislature, the Governor, and  
23 the commanding officer of every military base in Nebraska on or before  
24 November 15 of each year. The report submitted to the Legislature shall  
25 be submitted electronically.