



ARIZONA STATE SENATE
Forty-ninth Legislature, First Regular Session

PROGRAM PRESENTATION
Veterans' Benefit Counseling

Background

In 1925, the Legislature created the Veterans' Service Office and, in 1951, replaced the Veterans' Service Office with the Arizona Veterans' Service Commission. The Legislature integrated the Commission into the Department of Economic Security (DES) in 1973. In 1982, the Governor separated the Commission from DES and, in 1999, the Legislature made an advisory body and created a separate Department headed by a Governor-appointed director.

The Department of Veterans' Services provides services to Arizona's veterans, their dependents and their survivors. Veterans' benefit assistance provides a network of veterans' benefit counselors. As of January 2008, there were 60 benefit counselors. Veterans' benefit counselors (counselors) aid veterans by:

- 1) providing information.
- 2) giving counsel.
- 3) interacting with the Department of Veterans' Affairs (VA) to aid veterans with benefit claims and the appeals process through the VA.
- 4) providing assistance related to federal and state disability, pension, insurance, burial education, home loan, social security and other social service benefits.

Fiscal Information

According to the Joint Legislative Budget Committee, the FY 2008-2009 budget provides \$3,129,200 and 67 FTE positions from the state General Fund for counselors.

FY 2008-2009 Budget Action

The FY 2008-2009 budget action rolls back \$244,400 from Veterans' Benefit Counseling.

Attachments

Excerpt from the FY 2010 JLBC Baseline Book.

Prepared by Senate Research
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BB/LS/jas