

STATE OF OKLAHOMA

2nd Session of the 60th Legislature (2026)

SENATE BILL 1537

By: Pugh

AS INTRODUCED

An Act relating to the Oklahoma Veterans Commission; amending 72 O.S. 2021, Section 63.2, as amended by Section 1, Chapter 29, O.S.L. 2024 (72 O.S. Supp. 2025, Section 63.2), which relates to members of commission, requirements, and appointment; updating statutory language; modifying appointment procedures for Commission members; updating statutory references; and providing an effective date.

BE IT ENACTED BY THE PEOPLE OF THE STATE OF OKLAHOMA:

SECTION 1. AMENDATORY 72 O.S. 2021, Section 63.2, as amended by Section 1, Chapter 29, O.S.L. 2024 (72 O.S. Supp. 2025, Section 63.2), is amended to read as follows:

Section 63.2. A. The Oklahoma Veterans Commission shall consist of nine (9) members, all of whom shall be honorably discharged veterans. The members of the Commission shall be appointed by the Governor with the advice and consent of the Senate and shall serve at the pleasure of the Governor. All appointments shall be broadly representative of the veterans of this state in terms of age, gender, and race or ethnicity.

1 B. 1. Except as provided by paragraph ~~3~~ 2 of subsection C of
2 this section, the Governor shall appoint six of the members from
3 lists of names provided by the executive officer of each of the
4 following veterans' organizations in accordance with paragraph 1 of
5 subsection C of this section:

- 6 a. the American Legion,
- 7 b. the Veterans of Foreign Wars of the United States,
- 8 c. the Disabled American Veterans,
- 9 d. the Paralyzed Veterans of America,
- 10 e. the Military Order of the Purple Heart, and
- 11 f. the National Guard Association of Oklahoma.

12 2. The Governor shall also appoint three members at large, at
13 least one of whom shall have completed his or her military service
14 on or after September 11, 2001.

15 C. Appointments to the Commission for the six members
16 representing veterans' organizations shall be made as prescribed by
17 this subsection.

18 1. On or before March 1 of the year in which the term of the
19 organization's appointee expires, the executive officer of the
20 organization shall submit to the Governor the following:

- 21 a. a list of three persons qualified to serve as members
22 of the Commission,
- 23 b. a certificate of good standing for the organization
24 issued by the Secretary of State,

- 1 c. a copy of the organization's state and federal tax
2 returns for the immediately preceding tax year
3 including but not limited to the federal Return of
4 Organization Exempt From Income Tax (Form 990), and
5 d. a statement that describes the mission of the
6 organization and the services provided by the
7 organization and estimates to the best of the
8 executive officer's knowledge the total number of
9 veterans the organization served in the preceding
10 calendar year-; and

11 2. For each veterans' organization that ~~complies with paragraph~~
12 ~~1 of this subsection~~ provides a list pursuant to paragraph 1 of this
13 subsection, the Governor shall appoint a member ~~to the Commission~~
14 ~~from the~~ from such list ~~of names provided by the organization.~~

15 3. If ~~the~~ an organization fails to ~~comply with~~ provide a list
16 pursuant to paragraph 1 of this subsection, the Governor ~~may~~ shall
17 appoint a member ~~at large in lieu of a member~~ representing the
18 ~~particular~~ such organization ~~for the duration of the term. At the~~
19 ~~conclusion of the term, the appointment shall revert to an appointee~~
20 ~~representing the particular organization, subject to the~~
21 ~~requirements and process provided by this subsection.~~

22 D. Any vacancy on the Commission resulting from any cause shall
23 be filled by appointment by the Governor for the remainder of the
24 term as ~~provided by this subsection.~~ follows:

1 1. When a vacancy of one of the three at-large members on the
2 Commission occurs, the Governor shall promptly appoint a member at
3 large to fill the vacancy~~;~~ and

4 2. When a vacancy of one of the six members representing
5 veterans' organizations on the Commission occurs, the executive
6 officer of the organization represented by the vacant position
7 shall, not later than thirty (30) days after the vacancy occurs,
8 submit a list of three names of qualified persons and all other
9 information required by paragraph 1 of subsection C of this section
10 to the Governor.

11 ~~3.~~ For each veterans' organization that ~~complies with~~ provides
12 a list pursuant to paragraph 2 of this subsection, the Governor
13 shall choose a replacement from the list provided by ~~the~~ such
14 organization. If ~~the~~ such organization fails to ~~comply with~~ provide
15 a list pursuant to paragraph 2 of this subsection, the Governor ~~may~~
16 shall appoint a member ~~at large in lieu of a member~~ representing the
17 ~~particular~~ such organization for the remainder of the unexpired
18 term. ~~At the conclusion of the term, the appointment shall revert~~
19 ~~to an appointee representing the particular organization, subject to~~
20 ~~the requirements and process provided by subsection C of this~~
21 ~~section.~~

22 E. Current members of the Commission shall continue in office
23 until the expiration of their terms and until their successors are
24 appointed and enter upon the duties of their offices.

1 F. Appointments shall be made for terms of three (3) years.
2 Terms shall begin and expire on July 1 of the respective years. No
3 member shall serve for more than two consecutive full terms.

4 G. 1. No person shall be appointed by the Governor who is
5 related by affinity or consanguinity within the third degree to any
6 person employed by the Oklahoma Department of Veterans Affairs.

7 2. Before any member appointed as provided herein shall enter
8 upon his or her duties as a member of the Commission, he or she
9 shall take and subscribe to the oath of office as required by the
10 Oklahoma Constitution ~~of this state~~.

11 3. No member of the Commission shall be employed by the
12 Department during the time of his or her service on the Commission,
13 nor shall any person who served as a member of the Commission be
14 employed by the Department subsequent to his or her service on the
15 Commission for a period of two (2) years.

16 H. Notwithstanding any other provision of law, a person whose
17 nomination has been submitted to the Legislature to fill a vacancy
18 on the Commission that existed as of ~~the effective date of this act~~
19 April 18, 2024, may be appointed to the Commission on an acting or
20 interim basis, may assume the duties of the office, and may receive
21 any compensation or travel reimbursement allowed by law for the
22 position pending confirmation by the Senate if the term of the
23 former member whose position is vacant has expired as of ~~the~~
24

1 ~~effective date of this act~~ April 18, 2024, and if the nominee meets
2 the qualifications prescribed by this section.

3 SECTION 2. This act shall become effective November 1, 2026.
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