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AB-360 The State Bar: pro bono legal assistance: veterans. (2017-2018)

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Assembly Bill No. 360

CHAPTER 401

An act to add Section 6074 to the Business and Professions Code, relating to the State Bar.

[Approved by Governor October 02, 2017. Filed with Secretary of State October 02, 2017.]

LEGISLATIVE COUNSEL'S DIGEST

AB 360, Muratsuchi. The State Bar: pro bono legal assistance: veterans.

The State Bar Act declares that it has been the tradition of those licensed to practice law in this state to provide voluntary pro bono legal services to those who cannot afford the help of a lawyer, and that, in view of their expertise in areas that critically affect the lives and well-being of members of the public, lawyers are uniquely situated to provide invaluable assistance in order to benefit those who might otherwise be unable to assert or protect their interests.

This bill would require the State Bar of California to administer a program to coordinate pro bono civil legal assistance to veterans and their families who otherwise cannot afford legal services. The bill would also require the State Bar to provide resources and educational materials to attorneys and the public by, among other things, compiling a list of local bar associations, legal aid organizations, veterans service providers, and volunteer attorneys willing to provide pro bono legal services to veterans and posting the list on its Internet Web site, and by conducting a statewide survey of programs that provide civil legal assistance to veterans in order to identify whether and where there is a need for legal advice clinics, publishing a report and recommendations based upon its findings, and posting the report on its Internet Web site.

Vote: majority Appropriation: no Fiscal Committee: no Local Program: no

THE PEOPLE OF THE STATE OF CALIFORNIA DO ENACT AS FOLLOWS:

SECTION 1. Section 6074 is added to the Business and Professions Code, to read:

6074. (a) The State Bar shall administer a program to coordinate pro bono civil legal assistance to veterans and their families who otherwise cannot afford legal services.

(b) The State Bar shall engage with local bar associations, legal aid organizations, veterans service providers, and volunteer attorneys and encourage those groups to provide legal services throughout the state.

(c) The State Bar shall provide resources and educational materials to attorneys and the public in order to support the purposes of this section by, among other things, doing the following:

(1) Compiling a list of local bar associations, legal aid organizations, veterans service providers, and volunteer attorneys willing to provide pro bono legal services to veterans, organized by city and county, and posting the list on its Internet Web site.

(2) Conducting a statewide survey of programs that provide civil legal assistance to veterans in order to identify whether and where there is a need for legal advice clinics, publishing a report and recommendations based upon its findings no later than December 31, 2018, and posting the report on its Internet Web site.