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SB-156 Military and veterans: transition assistance: citizenship. (2017-2018)

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Senate Bill No. 156

CHAPTER 497

An act to amend Section 90 of, and to add Section 217 to, the Military and Veterans Code, relating to veterans, and declaring the urgency thereof, to take effect immediately.

[Approved by Governor October 05, 2017. Filed with Secretary of State October 05, 2017.]

LEGISLATIVE COUNSEL'S DIGEST

SB 156, Anderson. Military and veterans: transition assistance: citizenship.

Existing law requires, by July 1, 2015, the Department of Veterans Affairs to develop a transition assistance program for veterans who have been discharged from the Armed Forces of the United States or the National Guard of any state, as specified.

This bill would require the transition assistance program for veterans to provide information to noncitizens who are leaving military service in California or who have already been discharged from military service in California on how to become citizens, including information on where to acquire state legal assistance.

Existing law establishes the militia of the state, consisting of the National Guard, State Military Reserve, and the Naval Militia. Under existing law, the militia of the state consists of all able-bodied male citizens and all other able-bodied males who have declared their intention to become citizens of the United States, who are between 18 and 45 years of age, and who are residents of the state.

This bill would require the California National Guard to inform its members that it will assist noncitizen members in acquiring United States citizenship as soon as they are eligible. The bill would additionally require the California National Guard to, upon request of a noncitizen member, assist the member in filing all forms and paperwork necessary to become a United States Citizen.

This bill would declare that it is to take effect immediately as an urgency statute.

Vote: 2/3 Appropriation: no Fiscal Committee: yes Local Program: no

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

SECTION 1. Section 90 of the Military and Veterans Code is amended to read:

90. (a) By July 1, 2015, the department shall develop a transition assistance program for veterans who have been discharged from the Armed Forces of the United States or the National Guard of any state. The program shall be designed to assist veterans in successfully transitioning from military to civilian life in California and to complement the transition program offered by the United States Department of Defense. The program shall include, but shall not be limited to, the following California-specific

transition assistance information: higher education benefits and program information, vocational training assistance, small business resources and information, health care programs and services, mental health resources and information, military sexual trauma resources and information, and housing information.

(b) The transition assistance program for veterans shall provide information to noncitizens who are leaving military service in California or who have already been discharged from military service in California on how to become United States citizens, including information on where to acquire state legal assistance.

SEC. 2. Section 217 is added to the Military and Veterans Code, to read:

217. The California National Guard shall inform its members that it will assist noncitizen members in acquiring United States citizenship as soon as they are eligible. If a noncitizen member requests such assistance, then the California National Guard shall assist the member in filing all forms and paperwork necessary to become a United States citizen.

SEC. 3. This act is an urgency statute necessary for the immediate preservation of the public peace, health, or safety within the meaning of Article IV of the California Constitution and shall go into immediate effect. The facts constituting the necessity are:

In order to provide assistance to noncitizens who are leaving military service in California or are members of the California National Guard in becoming citizens at the earliest time possible, it is necessary for this act to take effect immediately.