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SENATE BILL NO. 831

AMENDMENT IN THE NATURE OF A SUBSTITUTE

(Proposed by the Senate Committee on Finance
on January 22, 2013)

(Patron Prior to Substitute—Senator Puller)

A BILL to amend the Code of Virginia by adding sections numbered 2.2-2001.2 and 2.2-2001.3, relating to employing military veterans.

Be it enacted by the General Assembly of Virginia:

1. That the Code of Virginia is amended by adding sections numbered 2.2-2001.2 and 2.2-2001.3 as follows:

§ 2.2-2001.2. Gold-Certified Veteran Employment Grant Fund established.

From such funds as may be appropriated by the General Assembly and any gifts, grants, or donations from public or private sources, there is hereby created in the state treasury a special nonreverting permanent fund to be known as the Gold-Certified Veteran Employment Grant Fund, hereafter referred to as "the Fund," to be administered by the Department of Veterans Services (the Department). The Fund shall be established on the books of the Comptroller. Interest earned on moneys in the Fund shall remain in the Fund and be credited to it. Any moneys remaining in the Fund, including interest thereon, at the end of each fiscal year shall not revert to the general fund but shall remain in the Fund. Moneys in the Fund shall be used solely for the purposes of providing grants to businesses who obtain gold certification in the Department's Virginia Values Veterans (V3) Certification Program. Expenditures and disbursements from the Fund shall be made by the State Treasurer on warrants issued by the Comptroller upon written request signed by the Commissioner of the Department. Grants from the Fund shall only be made to applicants to the Gold-Certified Veteran Employment Grant Program pursuant to § 2.2-2001.3.

§ 2.2-2001.3. Gold-Certified Veteran Employment Grant Program.

A. As used in this section:

"Disabled military veteran" means any person who (i) is rated by the U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs or its successor agency pursuant to federal law as having at least a 50 percent service-connected disability and (ii) was unemployed for at least six months in the calendar year immediately preceding the date on which the person was hired to fill a new full-time job.

"Full-time job" means a job in the Commonwealth of an indefinite duration, for which the grant applicant is the employer and for which the standard fringe benefits are paid by the taxpayer, requiring a minimum of either (i) 35 hours of an employee's time per week for the entire normal year of such taxpayer's operations, which "normal year" must consist of at least 48 weeks, or (ii) 1,680 hours per year. Seasonal or temporary positions and positions created when a job function is shifted from an existing location in the Commonwealth shall not qualify as full-time jobs.

"Returning military veteran" means any person who served on active duty on or after September 1, 2001.

"Veteran" means a disabled military veteran or a returning military veteran.

B. Beginning January 1, 2014, any business that obtains the gold level of certification in the Department of Veterans Services Virginia Values Veterans (V3) Certification Program may apply for a grant from the Fund. Such grant shall be a one-time amount not to exceed \$10,000 per business. The Department shall grant \$500 for a new full-time job created by the business and that pays an annual salary of at least \$50,000 for which a veteran is hired and employed continuously throughout the year. An additional \$500 shall be granted if the veteran is a disabled military veteran.

C. Businesses that have successfully applied for a grant from the Fund and maintain their gold level of certification may in subsequent years apply for an additional \$1,000 grant from the Fund per business per year.

D. A business that has been certified at the gold level in the V3 Certification Program may apply to the Department for a grant. Grants shall be issued in the order that each completed eligible application is received. In the event that the amount of eligible grants requested in a fiscal year exceeds the funds available in the Fund, such grants shall be paid in the next fiscal year in which funds are available.

E. The Department shall develop guidelines setting forth the general requirements of receiving gold level certification in the V3 Certification Program and of qualifying for a grant, to include an application form for the grant.