

Amendment to HB 1415-FN

1 Amend the title of the bill by replacing it with the following:

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3 AN ACT establishing a special veterans license plate and creating a fund and administrative
4 programs from the proceeds of the sale of such plates and establishing the New
5 Hampshire first for veterans program and authority.

6

7 Amend RSA 261:97-g as inserted by section 3 of the bill by inserting after paragraph IV the following
8 new paragraph:

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10 V. A person who qualifies for special number plates pursuant to this section may be issued
11 an additional plate for a motorcycle.

12

13 Amend the bill by replacing all after section 3 with the following:

14

15 4 New Subdivision; First for Veterans Program. Amend RSA 110-B by inserting after section 91
16 the following new subdivision:

17

First for Veterans Program

18 110-B:92 Declaration of Purpose. The general court declares it to be the purpose of this
19 subdivision to:

20 I. Maintain the state's ability to attract and retain veterans to New Hampshire and attain
21 and maintain a position as the most veteran-friendly state.

22 II. Acknowledge and address demand signals for critical resources, service, and support.

23 III. Recognize the gaps and the importance of public and private partnerships to identify,
24 develop, and resource solutions to facilitate overcoming barriers to veterans, service members and
25 their families.

26 IV. Learn, adapt, seek, and resource new and more transformational concepts that raise
27 awareness of the state's veteran-friendly advocacy, policy, and laws.

28 V. Develop veteran employment support and improve focus on veteran well-being.

29 VI. Provide strategic messaging and transition assistance programs and reinforce critical
30 gaps, including mental health care access, suicide prevention, substance use disorder, physical well
31 being, employment, and housing stability.

32 110-B:93 Definitions. In this subdivision:

33 I. "Authority" means the New Hampshire first for veterans authority.

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1 II. "Board" means the board of directors of the New Hampshire first for veterans authority.

2 III. "Grant obligations" means the legal obligation arising from the use of program funds.

3 110-B:94 New Hampshire First for Veterans Program Established.

4 I. There is hereby established the New Hampshire first for veterans program. The program
5 shall provide funding to promote the general welfare of the state's veterans, service members and
6 their families by providing quality services.

7 II. The program will prioritize efforts that:

8 (a) Contribute to ending veteran homelessness in New Hampshire;

9 (b) Attract and retain veterans to New Hampshire and match their unique skills with
10 veteran-friendly businesses and organizations and provide them with employment support;

11 (c) Improve access to physical and mental health care, suicide prevention measures, oral
12 health care options, and substance use disorder treatment;

13 (d) Support military skills transfer, training, and certification; and

14 (e) Address a broad range of educational opportunities, including institutions of higher
15 learning, on-the-job training, and apprenticeships and initiatives focused on the trades.

16 110-B-95 New Hampshire First For Veterans Authority.

17 I. There is hereby established the New Hampshire first for veterans authority, which shall
18 act as a both a public and private entity. The authority shall be constituted as a public
19 instrumentality of the state. The authority and power conferred by this subdivision shall be deemed
20 and held to be the performance of public and essential governmental functions. The authority shall
21 be a nonprofit corporation organized under RSA 292.

22 II. The authority shall be governed by a board of directors composed of 22 members. Voting
23 members shall not appoint designees to act in their places. A chairperson shall be elected from
24 among the members.

25 III. Board members with voting powers shall be as follows:

26 (a) One member of the senate, appointed by the president of the senate.

27 (b) Two members of the house of representatives, appointed by the speaker of the house
28 of representatives.

29 (c) Five members of the veterans council, appointed by the governor.

30 (d) The commissioner of the department of military affairs and veteran services, or
31 designee.

32 IV. Board members without voting powers shall be as follows:

33 (a) A representative from the New Hampshire first for veteran board, or designee.

34 (b) The commissioner of the employment security, or designee.

35 (c) The commissioner of the department of safety, or designee.

36 (d) The commissioner of the department of business and economic affairs, or designee.

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1 (e) Persons belonging to the state veterans advisory committee or the military
2 leadership team, appointed by the governor, with each having expertise, knowledge of, or experience
3 in one of the following areas:

- 4 (1) Housing stability.
- 5 (2) Physical health care.
- 6 (3) Mental health care and suicide prevention.
- 7 (4) Military skills transfer, licensing, and certifications.
- 8 (5) Veteran-friendly businesses or organizations.
- 9 (6) Oral health care professions.
- 10 (7) Substance use disorder programs.
- 11 (8) Educational institutions.
- 12 (9) Apprenticeships, on the job training, or the trades.

13 V.(a) The terms of state agency members, member of the senate, and members of the house
14 of representatives shall be coterminous with their respective terms in office.

15 (b) Members appointed by the governor may be removed from office for cause by the
16 governor. Cause for removal shall include incapacity or failure to perform a member's duties.
17 Vacancies shall be filled for the unexpired term of the office in the same manner as the original
18 appointment. Legislative members shall be entitled to mileage reimbursement at the legislative
19 rate.

20 VI. Seven voting members shall constitute a quorum. Decisions shall be made by a majority
21 of those present and voting. The board shall meet quarterly and at such other times as may be
22 deemed necessary by the chairperson.

23 VII. Board members shall not be subject to civil liability for acts performed in accordance
24 with their duties under this subdivision.

25 110-B:96 Powers and Duties of the Authority. The authority shall have all the powers necessary
26 and convenient to carry out and effectuate the purposes and provisions of this subdivision and shall:

27 I. Adopt bylaws for the regulation of its affairs and the conduct of its business.

28 II. Adopt criteria and guidelines for:

- 29 (a) The acquisition of resource assets;
- 30 (b) The restoration or rehabilitation of cultural and historical buildings or structures;

31 and

32 (c) The stewardship and monitoring of resource assets on which program funds are
33 expended.

34 III. Adopt policies deemed important or necessary to carry out the purposes of this
35 subdivision.

1 IV. Oversee and direct the expenditure of funds deposited in the New Hampshire first for
2 veterans fund in accordance with the purposes of this subdivision, which shall include the authority
3 to draw upon funds for program purposes and for administrative costs of the program.

4 V. Make and execute contracts for services necessary to carry out the purposes of this
5 subdivision.

6 VI. Enforce grant obligations through contract, acceptance of rights to enforcement, or other
7 legal actions as necessary to carry out the purposes of this subdivision.

8 VII. Prepare an annual report to be presented and filed, by no later than December 1, to the
9 president of the senate, the speaker of the house of representatives, the governor, and the state
10 library. The report shall detail the activities and administrative costs of the authority, as well as a
11 complete financial accounting of the funds established under RSA 110-B:99 and 110-B:100. The
12 report shall also include a historical summary of the program's activities to date. A copy of the
13 report shall be made available by the authority to any interested person.

14 VIII. Conduct an independent audit by a certified public accountant of its books and
15 accounts each fiscal year.

16 IX. Should the authority deem it appropriate:

17 (a) Adopt an official seal.

18 (b) Maintain an office and hire staff.

19 (c) Apply for, or accept from any source, gifts and donations of:

20 (1) Money, including money from appropriate fundraising activities;

21 (2) Labor, equipment, and supplies;

22 (3) Federal, local, private, and other matching funds and incentives; and

23 (4) Other assets to be deposited in the fund that may aid the authority in the
24 conduct of its affairs.

25 (d) Employ or retain, as independent contractors attorneys, accountants, and other
26 advisors, consultants, or agents as may be necessary without regard to any personnel or civil service
27 law of the state to prescribe their duties and qualifications, and to fix and pay their compensation, if
28 any.

29 (e) Appoint qualified individuals to serve as unpaid volunteers under such terms and
30 conditions as deemed necessary. Said volunteers or advisors may be paid a stipend and/or
31 reimbursed for any incidental expenses determined by the authority to be necessary and incurred
32 while performing the business of the authority.

33 110-B:97 Executive Director. The board of directors shall nominate one for appointment by the
34 governor to serve as an executive director. The executive director shall serve a term of 5 years, with
35 reappointment or a vacancy to be filled in the same manner as the original appointment. At the
36 request of the board, the governor may remove the executive director for cause. The chairperson of
37 the authority shall not serve concurrently as the executive director. The executive director shall:

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1 I. Coordinate the activities of state agencies directly involved with the administration of the
2 program in accordance with this subdivision.

3 II. Evaluate the eligible resources proposed for protection or restoration under this program,
4 and determine if these resources meet the criteria of the program, subsequent to instruction by the
5 board.

6 III. At the direction of the board, administer the affairs of the program and be directly
7 responsible for executing all policies of the board.

8 110-B:98 Status of Employees.

9 I. The authority may hire, fix, and pay compensation, prescribe duties and qualifications,
10 and establish personnel policies without regard to any personnel or civil service law or personnel or
11 civil service rule of the state. The employees of the authority shall not be classified employees of the
12 state within the meaning of RSA 21-I:49. Any individual employed by the authority shall be deemed
13 an employee at will and shall serve at the pleasure of the authority.

14 II. Notwithstanding the provisions of paragraph I, any individual employed by the authority
15 whose employment calls for 30 hours or more work in a normal calendar week, and whose position is
16 anticipated to have a duration of 6 months or more, shall be entitled to elect to receive such health,
17 dental, life insurance, deferred compensation, and retirement benefits as are afforded to classified
18 employees of the state provided, however, that the election is made in writing within 30 days of the
19 start of employment. Upon election by such individual, the authority shall pay from its revenues the
20 state's share of such benefits. Any remaining costs of health, dental, life insurance, deferred
21 compensation, and retirement benefits which an individual elects to receive pursuant to this section,
22 shall be withheld from such individual's salary as a payroll deduction. Written notice of the
23 availability of these benefit options shall be provided to each individual upon employment by the
24 authority.

25 110-B:99 Trust Fund Established; Administration.

26 I. There is established in the office of the state treasurer the New Hampshire first for
27 veterans trust fund. Moneys in the fund and any interest earned on the fund shall only be used for
28 the purpose of this subdivision. The trust fund shall be non-lapsing interest bearing funds and shall
29 be continually appropriated to the department of military affairs and veterans services.

30 II. The state treasurer shall invest the sums deposited in the fund in a prudent manner
31 consistent with the purposes of this subdivision. Interest earned on moneys in the fund shall accrue
32 to the fund to the extent allowed under law.

33 III. No funds of any state agency shall be transferred to the trust fund without authorization
34 from the general court. Federal funds accepted by the joint fiscal committee or governor for purposes
35 similar to those of this subdivision may be deposited in the trust fund.

36 110-B:100 Administrative Fund.

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1 I. There is established in the authority a separate fund to be known as the first for veterans
2 administrative fund. The total revenues generated to the administrative fund from this source shall
3 not exceed \$200,000 for each fiscal year. Any revenue generated from this source in excess of the
4 \$200,000 maximum per year shall be credited by the New Hampshire first for veterans trust fund in
5 RSA 110-B:99. In its annual report, the authority shall include the amount of revenues exceeding
6 the maximum which are credited to the New Hampshire first for veterans trust fund.

7 II. All sums so credited shall be appropriated to the authority for the following purposes:

8 (a) To pay the costs of administering and operating the authority, including all wages,
9 salaries, benefits, and other expenses authorized by the board or the executive director. The
10 authority may enter into a contract or agreement for provision of services to withhold on a monthly
11 basis all payroll and benefit costs for employees.

12 (b) For the payment of all expenses incident to the management and operation of the
13 authority consistent with its statutory purpose and as the board or the executive director may
14 determine.

15 III. This fund shall constitute a continuing appropriation for the benefit of the authority.
16 Any amount remaining to the credit of the authority at the close of any fiscal year, and any interest
17 accrued, shall be nonlapsing and shall be carried over and credited to the fund for the succeeding
18 year.

19 110-B:101 Program Administration; Matching Funds.

20 I. The authority shall distribute funds to further the purposes of this subdivision only to
21 eligible applicants. Eligible applicants shall include:

22 (a) Municipalities or other political subdivisions of the state; and

23 (b) Publicly-supported nonprofit corporations exempt from federal income taxation
24 under section 501(c) of the Internal Revenue Code.

25 II. Other parties wishing to participate in the program may partner with one or more
26 eligible applicants. At the option of eligible applicants and with the approval of the board, state
27 agencies may hold rights in resource assets acquired through the program by eligible applicants.
28 The applicant must demonstrate the commitment of the owner of the assets to participate in the
29 proposed action.

30 III. Financial assistance to eligible applicants shall be provided through grants, block
31 grants, and loans. Up to 50 percent of financial assistance provided each year may be provided
32 through loans. Principal and interest paid on such loans shall be deposited in the land and
33 community heritage investment program administrative fund established in RSA 227-M:7.
34 Financial assistance may only be expended on eligible resources for the following purposes:

35 (a) Ending veteran homelessness in New Hampshire;

36 (b) Attracting and retaining veterans to New Hampshire;

37 (c) Matching veteran skills with workforce development needs;

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1 (d) Businesses and organizations that honor and positively impact veterans, service
2 members, and their families;

3 (e) Employment support;

4 (f) Improving access to physical and mental health care;

5 (g) Suicide prevention measures;

6 (h) Providing oral health care options;

7 (i) Substance use disorder treatment;

8 (j) Support military skills transfer, training, and certification; or

9 (k) Addressing a range of educational opportunities including institutes of higher
10 learning, on the job training, apprenticeships and initiatives focused on the trades.

11 5 New Subparagraph; The State and Its Government; State Treasurer; Application of Receipts.
12 Amend RSA 6:12, I(b) by inserting after subparagraph (410) the following new subparagraph:

13 (411) Moneys deposited into the New Hampshire first for veterans trust fund
14 established in RSA 110-B:99.

15 (412) Moneys deposited into the first for veterans administrative fund established in
16 RSA 110-B:110.

17 6 Effective Date. This act shall take effect 60 days after its passage.

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2026-0602h

AMENDED ANALYSIS

This bill authorizes a special veterans license plate and establishes a fund and administrative programs from the proceeds of the sale of such plates.

This bill also establishes the first for veterans program, a program designed to attract, retain, and support veterans in the state.