I Mina'trentai Sais Na Liheslaturan Guåhan
BILL STATUS

BILL NO.	SPONSOR	TITLE	DATE INTRODUCED	DATE REFERRED	CMTE REFERRED	PUBLIC HEARING DATE	DATE COMMITTEE REPORT FILED	FISCAL NOTES	NOTES
227-36 (COR) As amended by the Committee on General Government Operations, Appropriations, and Housing; and further amended in the Committee of the Whole.	Amanda L. Shelton Telena Cruz Nelson Joe S. San Agustin Jose "Pedo" Terlaje James C. Moylan V. Anthony Ada Tina Rose Muña Barnes	AN ACT TO *ADD* A NEW ARTICLE 2 TO CHAPTER 67, TITLE 10, GUAM CODE ANNOTATED, RELATIVE TO ESTABLISHING THE VETERANS BILL OF RIGHTS ACT IN HELPING VETERANS ACCESS HOUSING, EMPLOYMENT, HIGHER EDUCATION, AND HEALTHCARE, THROUGH VARIOUS LOCAL AND FEDERAL PROGRAMS; TO APPROPRIATE FIVE HUNDRED THOUSAND DOLLARS ($500,000) FROM THE 2021 EARNED INCOME TAX CREDIT REIMBURSEMENT AND OR THE 2021 GENERAL FUND UNAPPROPRIATED REVENUES TO THE GUAM VETERANS AFFAIRS OFFICE TO IMPLEMENT THE SAME; AND TO CITE THIS ACT AS THE *"SECURING AND ENSURING THE RIGHTS VETERANS EARNED (SERVE) ACT. "*	11/30/21 6:13 p.m.	12/1/21	Committee on General Government Operations, Appropriations, and Housing	12/13/21 6:00 p.m.	2/10/22 4:49 p.m. As amended by the Committee on General Government Operations, Appropriations, and Housing	Request: 12/2/21 12/15/21	
SESSION DATE		**TITLE**	**DATE PASSED**	**TRANSMITTED**	**DUE DATE**	**NOTES**			
2/18/22		AN ACT TO *ADD* A NEW ARTICLE 2 TO CHAPTER 67, TITLE 10, GUAM CODE ANNOTATED, RELATIVE TO ESTABLISHING THE VETERANS BILL OF RIGHTS TO HELP VETERANS WITH ACCESS TO HOUSING, EMPLOYMENT, HIGHER EDUCATION, AND HEALTHCARE THROUGH VARIOUS LOCAL AND FEDERAL PROGRAMS; TO APPROPRIATE FIVE HUNDRED THOUSAND DOLLARS ($500,000) FROM THE 2021 EARNED INCOME TAX CREDIT REIMBURSEMENT OR THE 2021 GENERAL FUND UNAPPROPRIATED REVENUES TO THE GUAM OFFICE OF VETERANS AFFAIRS TO IMPLEMENT THE SAME; AND TO CITE THIS ACT AS THE *"SECURING AND ENSURING THE RIGHTS VETERANS EARNED (SERVE) ACT."*	2/25/22	2/28/22	3/11/22				

COPY

I MINA'TRENTAI SAIS NA LIHESLATURAN GUÅHAN
Thirty-Sixth Guam Legislature

February 28, 2022

The Honorable Lourdes A. Leon Guerrero
I Maga'hågan Guåhan
Ufisinan I Maga'håga
Hagåtña, Guam 96910

Dear *Maga'håga* Leon Guerrero:

Transmitted herewith are **Bill Nos. 170-36 (LS), 172-36 (LS), 202-36 (COR), 212-36 (COR), 223-36 (COR)** and **227-36 (COR);** and **Substitute Bill Nos. 151-36 (COR)** and **194-36 (COR)** which were passed by *I Mina'trentai Sais Na Liheslaturan Guåhan* on February 25, 2022.

Sincerely,

AMANDA L. SHELTON
Legislative Secretary

Enclosure (8)

Marilyn Tablante

RCVD AT CENTRAL FILES
FEB 28 '22 PM3:59

COPY

I MINA'TRENTAI SAIS NA LIHESLATURAN GUÅHAN
2022 (SECOND) Regular Session

CERTIFICATION OF PASSAGE OF AN ACT TO *I MAGA'HÅGAN GUÅHAN*

This is to certify that **Bill No. 227-36 (COR), "AN ACT TO *ADD* A NEW ARTICLE 2 TO CHAPTER 67, TITLE 10, GUAM CODE ANNOTATED, RELATIVE TO ESTABLISHING THE VETERANS BILL OF RIGHTS TO HELP VETERANS WITH ACCESS TO HOUSING, EMPLOYMENT, HIGHER EDUCATION, AND HEALTHCARE THROUGH VARIOUS LOCAL AND FEDERAL PROGRAMS; TO APPROPRIATE FIVE HUNDRED THOUSAND DOLLARS ($500,000) FROM THE 2021 EARNED INCOME TAX CREDIT REIMBURSEMENT OR THE 2021 GENERAL FUND UNAPPROPRIATED REVENUES TO THE GUAM OFFICE OF VETERANS AFFAIRS TO IMPLEMENT THE SAME; AND TO CITE THIS ACT AS THE "*SECURING AND ENSURING THE RIGHTS VETERANS EARNED (SERVE) ACT*,"** was on the 25th day of February 2022, duly and regularly passed.

Therese M. Terlaje

Therese M. Terlaje
Speaker

Attested:

Amanda Shelton

Amanda L. Shelton
Legislative Secretary

This Act was received by *I Maga'hågan Guåhan* this 28th day of Feb., 2022, at 4:10 o'clock P.M.

Marilyn Tablante

Assistant Staff Officer
Maga'håga's Office

APPROVED:

Lourdes A. Leon Guerrero
I Maga'hågan Guåhan

Marilyn Tablante

RCVD AT CENTRAL FILE
FEB 28 '22 PM4:07

Date:_____

Public Law No._____

I MINA'TRENTAI SAIS NA LIHESLATURAN GUÅHAN
2021 (FIRST) Regular Session

Bill No. 227-36 (COR)
As amended by the Committee on General Government Operations, Appropriations, and Housing; and further amended in the Committee of the Whole.

Introduced by:

Amanda L. Shelton
Telena Cruz Nelson
Joe S. San Agustin
Jose "Pedo" Terlaje
James C. Moylan
V. Anthony Ada
Tina Rose Muña Barnes
Frank Blas Jr.
Joanne Brown
Christopher M. Dueñas
Sabina Flores Perez
Clynton E. Ridgell
Telo T. Taitague
Therese M. Terlaje
Mary Camacho Torres

AN ACT TO *ADD* A NEW ARTICLE 2 TO CHAPTER 67, TITLE 10, GUAM CODE ANNOTATED, RELATIVE TO ESTABLISHING THE VETERANS BILL OF RIGHTS TO HELP VETERANS WITH ACCESS TO HOUSING, EMPLOYMENT, HIGHER EDUCATION, AND HEALTHCARE THROUGH VARIOUS LOCAL AND FEDERAL PROGRAMS; TO APPROPRIATE FIVE HUNDRED THOUSAND DOLLARS ($500,000) FROM THE 2021 EARNED INCOME TAX CREDIT REIMBURSEMENT OR THE 2021 GENERAL FUND UNAPPROPRIATED REVENUES TO THE GUAM OFFICE OF VETERANS AFFAIRS TO IMPLEMENT THE SAME; AND TO CITE THIS ACT AS THE "*SECURING AND ENSURING THE RIGHTS VETERANS EARNED (SERVE) ACT.*"

BE IT ENACTED BY THE PEOPLE OF GUAM:

Section 1. Legislative Findings and Intent. *I Liheslaturan Guåhan* acknowledges the sacrifices that our men and women have made during their military service to protect the nation and U.S. territories; however, when government services for veterans are available, they are not widely known throughout the *Guåhan* community. Furthermore, the landscape of veterans services is ambiguous and difficult for stakeholders to navigate.

I Liheslatura further finds that the men and women who dutifully served in the armed services are entitled to local and federal benefits as veterans; however, the assistance received in accessing government programs is unreasonably delayed and rigorous.

I Liheslatura further finds that veterans' rights and benefits must be acted on in a timely manner by the government agencies who facilitate and administer these programs.

Therefore, it is the intent of *I Liheslaturan Guåhan* to establish a Veterans Bill of Rights to advance the livelihoods of veterans and increase their access to critical services for housing, employment, education, and healthcare.

Section 2. A new Article 2 is hereby *added* to Chapter 67 of Title 10, Guam Coded Annotated, to read:

"ARTICLE 2

SECURING AND ENSURING THE RIGHTS VETERANS EARNED (SERVE) ACT

§ 67200. Short Title.
§ 67201. Guam Office of Veterans Affairs as Lead Agency.
§ 67202. Veterans Bill of Rights.

§ 67200. Short Title.

This Act shall be cited as the "Securing and Ensuring the Rights Veterans Earned (SERVE) Act."

§ 67201. Guam Office of Veterans Affairs as Lead Agency.

All references to "Office" in this Act shall mean the Guam Office of Veterans Affairs established under this Chapter, which shall be the agency responsible for implementing the provisions of the Veterans Bill of Rights and this Act. In the development of programs and services under this Act, the Office shall consider the input of the Guam Veterans Commission.

The Office may apply for, receive, and administer grants or subgrants, or enter into intra-governmental and inter-governmental agreements to provide services to veterans, as defined pursuant to local or federal laws, regulations, or guidelines. The Office is authorized to comply with the requirements of federal grants, subgrants, and intra-governmental and inter-governmental agreements, to include the provision of services to individuals who may qualify for such services pursuant to the terms of federal grants, subgrants, and intra-governmental and inter-governmental agreements.

§ 67202. Veterans Bill of Rights.

(a) Housing Assistance.

(1) Increase veterans' access to housing assistance by streamlining processes through inter-governmental and intra-governmental partnerships.

(A) The Office shall target housing programs and streamline federal and local processes to expedite and reward applicants through interagency Memoranda of Understanding or Memoranda of Agreement.

(b) Employment Support.

(1) Increase veterans' access to jobs by applying data to direct veterans to in-demand fields.

(A) The Office shall create and produce electronic reports of workforce need projections, by industry, job type, geography, and needed credentials; including a comparison of workforce needs with existing and projected workforce and credential availability; and highlight top in-demand industries, job types, and credentials.

(B) The Office shall include in its report(s) a pathway where in-demand job titles and credentials would leverage skills, experience, and credentials held by veterans; and forward the underlying data report(s) and additional information monthly to appropriate military outplacement offices, education centers, non-profit programs, and government agencies working to connect veterans with jobs.

(c) Higher Learning Opportunities.

(1) Award college credit from military training and experiences.

(A) Every veteran who is enrolled as a full-time or part-time student in good standing at any institution within the local university system and community college system, shall, upon application, be granted academic credits, without limitation, towards his or her degree for completion of courses that were part of such veteran's military training or service if the completed courses meet the standards of the local institution that are equivalent to or greater than the standards set by the American Council on Education for the awarding of academic credits. No fee, tuition, or other charge shall be assessed against a veteran who qualifies for such credit pursuant to this Subsection.

(B) The Office shall adopt procedures as necessary to fully implement the provisions in this Section.

(2) Increase flexibility in course registration for veterans.

(A) At institutions within the local university system and community college system:

(i) Institutions that offer an early course registration period for any segment of the student population shall have a process in place to offer early course registration to students who are veterans or National Guard members.

(ii) A student who is called to active duty in the U.S. Armed Forces after having regularly attended a course for thirteen (13) or more weeks or having completed eighty-five percent (85%) of the course's work for the term through acceleration may be given credit for each course in which he or she has a letter grade of "C" or better.

(iii) Students called to active duty may be entitled to a one hundred percent (100%) refund of tuition and fees if no accommodation(s) are provided by the educational institution.

(iv) Veterans with no previous college experience shall be permitted an extension of one (1) week to file applications after the end of the registration period and allowed to begin classes pending completion of their application and provision of supporting documents with the clearance of the institutions' admissions and records office.

(v) Upon return from active duty, veterans may register after the normal registration period ends, without late fees or other penalties.

(3) Leverage veterans' experiences and expand proven cost-effective training programs.

(A) The Office shall annually review apprentice, training, and other vocational programs focused on providing job training and placement to returning military service members and veterans. Such annual review shall evaluate the costs and results, and recommend programs for expansion with federal and/or local funding, including an estimate of future returns to Guam, of improved outcomes from program expansion.

(B) The Office shall provide an annual report to the Speaker of *I Liheslaturan Guåhan* and *I Maga'hågan Guåhan* on January 1 of each year for five (5) years after the passage of this Act, to be used to inform annual budget decisions.

(d) Access to Healthcare.

(1) Increase veterans' access to healthcare through eligible healthcare coverage and treatment based on service.

(A) The Office shall develop and operate veteran health navigator services to increase veteran access to healthcare coverage and services.

(i) The Office shall identify, train, and deploy veteran health navigators who have direct knowledge of the veteran communities they serve.

(ii) Veteran health navigators shall identify all federal and other healthcare benefits, coverage, and services available to veterans and their families.

(iii) Veteran health navigators shall coordinate with relevant departments, healthcare providers, and health insurance programs to help veterans and their beneficiaries apply for coverage under such programs, and help veterans overcome

barriers within the healthcare system to ensure enrollment in healthcare plans and effective delivery and coordination of healthcare services.

(2) Prevent veteran suicide and increase veterans' access to mental health services.

(A) Ensure veterans and their families have access to mental health treatment, including for post-traumatic stress disorder, depression, suicide, and suicidal ideation.

(i) Ensure that access to mental health coverage, services, and treatment is included as a holistic approach of the veteran health navigator program described in Subsection (d)(1)(A) of this Section. Based on the information about the unique needs, coverage, and treatment gaps faced by veterans and their families, the Office shall examine all existing programs designed to increase access to affordable quality healthcare and evaluate whether the needs of veterans and their families are met by such programs.

(ii) The Office shall execute any steps identified in Subsection (d)(2)(A)(i) of this Section and produce a report of its findings, recommendations, to include any recommended legislative or budgetary actions; and, shall transmit the report to the Speaker of *I Liheslaturan Guåhan* and *I Maga'hågan Guåhan*, and release it to news media.

(iii) The Office shall prepare a report showing the impacts of Medicaid expansion on veterans and their families to date and shall include any recommendations for more inclusion or serving veterans and their families; and, shall transmit such

report to the Speaker of *I Liheslaturan Guåhan* and *I Maga'hågan Guåhan*, and release it to the news media.

(e) Burial Benefits pursuant to 10 GCA § 67105."

Section 3. Appropriation. The sum of Five Hundred Thousand Dollars ($500,000) from the revenues received from the earned income tax credit reimbursement for calendar year 2021 pursuant to Section 7530(b) of Chapter 77, Internal Revenue Code of 1986, and Section 9625(a) of U.S. Public Law 117-2, the American Rescue Plan Act or the Fiscal Year 2021 General Fund Unappropriated Revenues, is hereby appropriated to the Guam Office of Veterans Affairs for its operations and the implementation of programs and services under this Act for Fiscal Year 2022. This appropriation shall be available until fully expended.

Section 4. Implementation. The Guam Office of Veterans Affairs shall have one (1) year from the effective date of this Act to implement programs and services, and any other mandates under the Veterans Bill of Rights as established by this Act.

Section 5. Severability. If any provision of this Act or its application to any person or circumstance is found to be invalid or contrary to law, such invalidity shall not affect other provisions or applications of this Act that can be given effect without the invalid provision or application, and to this end the provisions of this Act are severable.

Section 6. Effective Date. This Act shall be effective upon enactment.