



Montana Legislative Services Division
Office of Research and Policy Analysis

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August 19, 2014

Sen. David Wanzenreid
PO Box 2428
Missoula, MT 59806-2428

Re: HJR-30 study of
benefits for veterans and military personnel

Dear Mr. Chairman,

During the 2013 session of the Montana Legislature, Representative Hansen carried and the legislature passed House Joint Resolution 30, a resolution to compile information on state and federal benefits offered to active-duty or reserve military personnel, members of the Montana National Guard, and veterans of each. The Legislative Council directed Legislative Services Division staff to apprise interested interim committees of the study's results as they stand at the time of each committee's final meeting.

The Children, Families, Health, and Human Services Interim Committee has oversight over the Montana Department of Health and Human Services and that department reports one program with two campuses under its purview that provides benefits to veterans. These are the Montana Veterans' Home in Columbia Falls and the Eastern Montana Veterans' Home in Glendive. As for all the other services provided by the DPHHS, Director Opper states that "active and former military personnel are treated the same as other Montana citizens applying for department benefits and/or services."

Through these two facilities veterans who qualify for admission (1) receive the federal U.S. Department of Veterans' Affairs (USDVA) contribution to a veteran's daily cost of care rate, and (2) benefit from the 8.3 percent of the Montana cigarette tax revenue (\$2 million) which is designated for use by the state's veterans' homes. Further, the existence of a USDVA pharmacy in the Columbia Falls facility enables both veterans who live in the facility and those who reside in the surrounding areas to access a USDVA pharmacy and the associated discount for prescription medications.

The specific statutory authorization and dollar amounts associated with this program are found in the attached table.

Sincerely,

Casey Barrs
Legislative Analyst
Legislative Services Division

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Department of Public Health and Human Services

Benefit Description	Authority / Guidance	Beneficiary Type	#	Value in \$	Comment
Montana Veteran's Homes (2) (a) Glendive (b) Columbia Falls	10-2-401, et.seq., MCA; ARM 37.45.102, et.seq.; 38 CFR Part 51, Subpart C; Cigarette Tax: §16-11-119(1)(a)	Veterans and Veterans' spouses	†(a) 80 (b) 117	(a) 142,526 (b) 1,972,072 (Gen admin) 60,606	All figures: May 2014 † Number of beds. The avg daily population was (a) 111.23 , and (b) 69.18