

AMENDED IN SENATE JULY 2, 2012

AMENDED IN ASSEMBLY MAY 25, 2012

CALIFORNIA LEGISLATURE—2011–12 REGULAR SESSION

**ASSEMBLY BILL**

**No. 2490**

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**Introduced by Assembly Member Butler**

February 24, 2012

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An act to add *Chapter 4 (commencing with Section 1840) to Division 8 of the Military and Veterans Code, and to add Article 6 (commencing with Section 2695) to Chapter 4 of Title 1 of Part 3 to the Penal Code, relating to veterans.*

LEGISLATIVE COUNSEL'S DIGEST

AB 2490, as amended, Butler. Veterans: correctional counselors.

Existing law establishes the Department of Veterans Affairs, which is responsible for administering various programs and services for the benefit of veterans. Existing law also authorizes each county board of supervisors to appoint a county veterans service officer to perform specified veterans-related services, including assisting veterans in pursuing claims for federal or state veterans' benefits.

Existing law authorizes the Department of Corrections and Rehabilitation to employ correctional counselors. Existing law provides that correctional officers are peace officers, as specified.

This bill would require that at every state prison that is under the jurisdiction of the Department of Corrections and Rehabilitation a correctional counselor shall be responsible for assisting veterans who are inmates in pursuing claims for federal veterans' benefits, or in establishing rights to any other privilege, preference, care, or compensation provided under federal or state law because of honorable

service in the military. The bill would require the assigned correctional counselor to coordinate with the Department of Veterans Affairs and county veterans service officers or veterans service organizations in the county in which the prison is located for advice and assistance.

Vote: majority. Appropriation: no. Fiscal committee: yes. State-mandated local program: no.

*The people of the State of California do enact as follows:*

1     ~~SECTION 1. It is the intent of the Legislature to help inmates~~  
2 ~~who have served in the military to access federal and state veterans'~~  
3 ~~benefits earned from military service so that inmates who have~~  
4 ~~served in the military are better equipped to successfully reintegrate~~  
5 ~~into the community, thereby reducing costs to the state.~~

6     SECTION 1. Chapter 4 (commencing with Section 1840) is  
7 added to Division 8 of the Military and Veterans Code, to read:

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9                    CHAPTER 4. VETERANS IN STATE PRISON

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11     1840. As set forth in Article 6 (commencing with Section 2695)  
12 of Chapter 4 of Title 1 of Part 3 of the Penal Code, at every state  
13 prison that is under the jurisdiction of the Department of  
14 Corrections and Rehabilitation, a correctional counselor shall be  
15 responsible for assisting veterans who are inmates in pursuing  
16 claims for federal veterans' benefits, or in establishing rights to  
17 any other privilege, preference, care, or compensation provided  
18 under federal or state law because of honorable service in the  
19 military. The assigned correctional counselor shall coordinate  
20 with the Department of Veterans Affairs and the county veterans  
21 service officer or veterans service organizations, or both, in the  
22 county in which the prison is located for advice and assistance.

23     SEC. 2. Article 6 (commencing with Section 2695) is added  
24 to Chapter 4 of Title 1 of Part 3 of the Penal Code, to read:

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26                    Article 6. Veterans In State Prisons

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28     2695. At every state prison that is under the jurisdiction of the  
29 Department of Corrections and Rehabilitation, a correctional  
30 counselor shall be responsible for assisting veterans who are  
31 inmates in pursuing claims for federal veterans' benefits, or in

1 establishing rights to any other privilege, preference, care, or  
2 compensation provided under federal or state law because of  
3 honorable service in the military. The assigned correctional  
4 counselor shall coordinate with the Department of Veterans Affairs  
5 and the county veterans service officer or veterans service  
6 organizations, or both, in the county in which the prison is located  
7 for advice and assistance.

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