

AMENDED IN ASSEMBLY APRIL 22, 2009

CALIFORNIA LEGISLATURE—2009—10 REGULAR SESSION

ASSEMBLY BILL

No. 710

Introduced by Assembly Member Yamada

February 26, 2009

An act to add Section 703 to the Military and Veterans Code, relating to military and veterans.

LEGISLATIVE COUNSEL'S DIGEST

AB 710, as amended, Yamada. Veterans' Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Fund.

Existing law provides benefits for state military veterans.

This bill would require the Department of Veterans Affairs to submit a grant application to the federal Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration (SAMHSA) for the purposes of funding community-based organizations, certified by the department, to provide substance abuse and mental health services to veterans.

This bill would require that all grant money awarded to the department by SAMHSA be deposited into the Veterans' Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Fund, a special fund the bill would create, and from which moneys would be appropriated by the Legislature to the department for purposes of funding community-based organizations that provide substance abuse and mental health programs that would benefit California veterans and to pay reasonable administrative expenses.

This bill would also require the department to develop a process by which to certify community-based organizations that receive funding, and require the department to establish criteria of success for the purposes of determining renewal of funding to those community-based

organizations. *The bill would, in counties in which there are no community-based organizations that serve veterans, permit a county to apply for a grant to be used for purposes related to the funding and provision of substance abuse and mental health services to veterans.*

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. Section 703 is added to the Military and Veterans
2 Code, to read:

3 703. (a) The department shall submit a grant application to
4 the federal Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services
5 Administration (SAMHSA) for the purposes of funding
6 community-based organizations certified by the department to
7 provide substance abuse and mental health services to veterans.

8 (b) All grant money awarded to the department by SAMHSA,
9 and any interest earned thereon, shall be deposited into the
10 Veterans' Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Fund,
11 which is hereby created as a special fund in the State Treasury.
12 Moneys in the fund shall, upon appropriation by the Legislature,
13 be used by the department for purposes of funding
14 community-based organizations that provide substance abuse and
15 mental health programs that, in the discretion of the secretary,
16 would benefit California veterans and to pay reasonable
17 administrative expenses.

18 (c) (1) (A) The department shall determine how to allocate and
19 disburse funds in the Veterans' Substance Abuse and Mental Health
20 Services Fund to community-based organizations. The funds
21 disbursed shall be used only for the purposes of providing
22 substance abuse and mental health services to veterans, including,
23 but not limited to, the treatment of posttraumatic stress disorder,
24 *including military sexual trauma.*

25 (B) *For purposes of this subdivision, "military sexual trauma"*
26 *means sexual harassment or physical assault that is of a sexual*
27 *nature, which an individual experiences during the time he or she*
28 *is in the military.*

29 (2) The department shall develop a certification process by
30 which to certify community-based organizations that receive
31 funding pursuant to this section. The department is authorized to

1 adopt certification standards or conditions that may be required
2 by SAMHSA. Only community-based organizations certified by
3 the department shall be eligible for funding.

4 (d) Community-based organizations that receive funds pursuant
5 to this section shall annually prepare a report on the programs and
6 services supported by those funds. The report shall be submitted
7 to the department for the purposes of determining renewal of
8 funding to a community-based organization, based upon criteria
9 for measuring success established by the department.

10 (e) *In counties where there are no community-based*
11 *organizations that serve veterans, a county may apply for a grant*
12 *under this section to be used by the county for purposes related to*
13 *the funding and provision of substance abuse and mental health*
14 *services to veterans.*