

CONCURRENCE IN SENATE AMENDMENTS

AB 1775 (Ward)

As Amended August 13, 2026

Majority vote

SUMMARY

This bill requires licensing entities within the Department of Consumer Affairs (DCA) to expedite, and authorizes to assist with, initial licensure for an applicant who has served as an active-duty member of the U.S. Armed Forces and received a discharge solely as a result of federal action to restrict transgender participation in the military. This bill's implementation is delayed to June 1, 2027, for the Speech-Language Pathology and Audiology and Hearing Aid Dispensers Board. This bill requires DCA to annually report the number of applications received for expedited licenses resulting from this bill. This bill requires the Department of Veterans Affairs (CalVet) to revise its Military Discharge Upgrade Grant Program prioritization criteria, as specified, and establish a Veteran's Housing and Supportive Services Grant Program.

Senate Amendments

Amendments add co-authors, make technical and clarifying changes, and delay implementation for the Speech-Language Pathology and Audiology and Hearing Aid Dispensers Board to 2027.

COMMENTS

AB 1775 (Ward) would establish a Veteran's Housing and Supportive Services Grant Program as well as require CalVet to revise the prioritization criteria of its Military Discharge Upgrade Grant Program. California is at the forefront of protecting its veterans. The bill permits the DCA to expedite and authorizes licensing entities to assist with initial licensure for an applicant who was previously discharged solely as a result of federal action to restrict transgender participation in the military. AB 1775 highlights the importance of what a state can do to help its veterans as federal policy transitions them from holding active duty status to discharged. CalVet and DCA would be the primary agencies involved with the implementation of AB 1775. As federal restrictions limit the transgender military community further, California is taking the necessary steps to aid in the service members return to home.

According to the Author

AB 1775 is a vital lifeline to ensure we provide critical housing, employment, and transition-to-civilian-life support for service members being discharged from the U.S. military as a result of President Donald Trump's Executive Order (EO) 14183, which targets transgender service members. California has a responsibility to step in when the federal government turns its back on people who served honorably. These service members are being forced out of service not because of misconduct or performance, but because of who they are. AB 1775 ensures that California does not compound that injustice by leaving veterans without housing, jobs, or a clear path to stability.

Arguments in Support

The Service Women's Action Network states: "AB 1775 addresses a clear and urgent transition gap. As outlined in the bill's background materials, some service members are experiencing abrupt or involuntary separations with limited time to prepare for civilian life, in some cases with little notice and disruption to pay and benefits. These conditions create significant risks for housing instability, unemployment, and gaps in access to care. From

SWAN's experience working directly with service members and veterans, we know that the transition period is one of the most vulnerable points in a military career. When separation processes are compressed or inconsistent, individuals face barriers to securing housing, transferring credentials, and accessing earned benefits—all of which can have long-term impacts on economic security and wellbeing.

Arguments in Opposition

None on file.

FISCAL COMMENTS

This bill has unknown costs for each licensing entity within DCA to validate an applicant's eligibility for expedited licensure under this bill. These costs will depend on the number of people impacted by EO 14183; however, DCA anticipates they will be minor and absorbable (various special funds). The bill will result in one-time cost of approximately \$197,000 for the Office of Information Services (OIS) within DCA for associated workload to update language for online and paper applications for all programs. OIS anticipates these costs will be absorbable by redirecting existing maintenance resources. The bill will also result in unknown ongoing General Fund cost pressures, likely in the low millions of dollars, to continue funding the grant program. Staff notes that the Budget Act of 2026 provides \$2 million in one-time funding. This allocation supports the Veterans Military Discharge Upgrade Grant Program for veterans filing discharge upgrade applications, and for no cost legal services for veterans who are able to demonstrate their less than honorable characterization of service was connected to gender identity, behavioral health condition, traumatic brain injury, sexual assault, sexual harassment, or sexual orientation. The bill will also result in unknown costs to the California Department of Veterans Affairs (CalVet) to develop the new grant program's criteria, procedures, accountability measures, and to oversee grant administration. The Budget Act of 2026 specifies that up to five percent of the funds provided for veteran employment, housing, and discharge upgrade support may be used for administrative costs.

VOTES:

ASM MILITARY AND VETERANS AFFAIRS: 8-0-0

YES: Schiavo, Jeff Gonzalez, Ávila Farías, Carrillo, Davies, Irwin, Quirk-Silva, Valencia

ASM BUSINESS AND PROFESSIONS: 16-0-3

YES: Berman, Addis, Ahrens, Alanis, Bains, Aguiar-Curry, Caloza, Chen, Elhawary, Haney, Hart, Irwin, Jackson, Lowenthal, Nguyen, Pellerin

ABS, ABST OR NV: Johnson, Hadwick, Macedo

ASM APPROPRIATIONS: 11-0-4

YES: Wicks, Aguiar-Curry, Calderon, Caloza, Fong, Mark González, Krell, Pacheco, Pellerin, Sharp-Collins, Solache

ABS, ABST OR NV: Hoover, Dixon, Ta, Tangipa

ASSEMBLY FLOOR: 64-1-15

YES: Addis, Aguiar-Curry, Ahrens, Alanis, Alvarez, Arambula, Ávila Farías, Bains, Bauer-Kahan, Bennett, Berman, Boerner, Bonta, Bryan, Calderon, Caloza, Carrillo, Chen, Connolly, Davies, Elhawary, Flora, Fong, Gabriel, Garcia, Gipson, Jeff Gonzalez, Mark González, Haney, Harabedian, Hart, Irwin, Jackson, Kalra, Krell, Lee, Lowenthal, McKinnor, Nguyen, Ortega, Pacheco, Papan, Patel, Pellerin, Petrie-Norris, Quirk-Silva, Ramos, Ransom, Michelle Rodriguez, Rogers, Blanca Rubio, Schiavo, Schultz, Sharp-Collins, Solache, Soria, Stefani, Valencia, Wallis, Ward, Wicks, Wilson, Zbur, Rivas

NO: DeMaio

ABS, ABST OR NV: Castillo, Dixon, Ellis, Gallagher, Hadwick, Hoover, Johnson, Lackey, Macedo, Muratsuchi, Patterson, Celeste Rodriguez, Sanchez, Ta, Tangipa

SENATE FLOOR: 33-0-7

YES: Allen, Alvarado-Gil, Archuleta, Arreguín, Ashby, Becker, Blakespear, Cabaldon, Caballero, Cervantes, Cortese, Durazo, Gonzalez, Grayson, Grove, Hurtado, Laird, Limón, McGuire, McNerney, Menjivar, Padilla, Pérez, Reyes, Richardson, Rubio, Smallwood-Cuevas, Stern, Strickland, Umberg, Wahab, Weber Pierson, Wiener

ABS, ABST OR NV: Choi, Dahle, Jones, Niello, Ochoa Bogh, Seyarto, Valladares

UPDATED

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