

HOUSE No. 2037

The Commonwealth of Massachusetts

HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES, June 8, 1945.

The committee on Military Affairs and Public Safety, to whom was recommitted the Bill to change the designation of the soldiers' relief department of the city of Boston to the veterans' service department and to change the designation of the soldiers' relief commissioner in charge of said department to veterans' service commissioner (House, No. 1271), and to whom were referred so much of the final report of the special Post-War Rehabilitation Commission (including members of the General Court) established (under chapter 71 of the Resolves of 1943) to make a survey and study of post-war problems of the Commonwealth relative to economic and other conditions (House, No. 1710) as relates to providing for the establishment and maintenance of veterans' centers throughout the Commonwealth, and establishing a division, to be known as the Massachusetts veterans' services division, and also an advisory council to assist the commissioner of veterans' services, and the petition (accompanied by bill, House, No. 986) of Leslie B. Cutler relative to the appointment in towns of directors of veterans' services to disburse soldiers' relief and war allowances, report (in part on House, No. 1710) the accompanying bill (House, No. 2037).

For the committee,

FREDERICK E. PIERCE.

The Commonwealth of Massachusetts

In the Year One Thousand Nine Hundred and Forty-Five.

AN ACT RELATIVE TO MUNICIPAL AND DISTRICT DEPARTMENTS OF VETERANS' SERVICES, UNDER DIRECTORS OF VETERANS' SERVICES, AND TO THE POWERS AND DUTIES OF SUCH DEPARTMENTS AND DIRECTORS.

1 *Whereas*, The deferred operation of this act would
2 in part defeat its purpose, which is to make immedi-
3 ately available to returning Massachusetts veterans
4 of World War II and other veterans advice and
5 counsel to enable such veterans to obtain without
6 delay the employment, vocational, educational, hos-
7 pitalization, pension and other benefits to which
8 they may be entitled, therefore this act is hereby
9 declared to be an emergency law, necessary for the
10 immediate preservation of the public convenience.

Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives in General Court assembled, and by the authority of the same, as follows:

1 SECTION 1. Chapter one hundred and fifteen of
2 the General Laws is hereby amended by inserting
3 after section twenty-five, under the caption LOCAL
4 DEPARTMENTS OF VETERANS' SERVICES, the five
5 following sections:—

6 *Section 26.* The mayors of cities and the select-
7 men of towns, other than cities and towns which

8 become a part of a district as authorized by the
9 second paragraph of this section, shall cause to be
10 established and maintained in their respective cities
11 and towns a department for the purpose of furnish-
12 ing such information, advice and assistance to
13 veterans, as such term is defined under authority of
14 this chapter, as may be necessary to enable them
15 to procure the benefits to which they are or may be
16 entitled relative to employment, vocational or other
17 educational opportunities, hospitalization, medical
18 care, pensions and other veterans' benefits. Each
19 department so established and maintained shall be
20 known as the department of veterans' services, and
21 the officer in charge thereof shall be known as the
22 director of veterans' services.

23 Two or more adjoining towns each having a
24 population of less than five thousand, or, with the
25 written consent of the commissioner in each instance,
26 two or more adjoining towns of which only one has
27 a population of five thousand or over, or two or more
28 adjoining municipalities, only one of which is a city
29 and only one of which has a population of five
30 thousand or over, may, in a city by vote of the city
31 council thereof, and in a town by vote of the select-
32 men thereof, form a district for the purposes set
33 forth in the first paragraph of this section, including
34 the appointment and compensation of a director of
35 veterans' services, for the enforcement therein of
36 such purposes and of such other provisions of law
37 as it may be his duty to enforce.

38 The director of veterans' services of each district
39 established under authority of the preceding para-
40 graph shall, under the direction of the district board
41 referred to in section twenty-seven, perform the

42 duties of his office in each of the municipalities com-
43 prising his district.

44 *Section 27.* In every district established under
45 authority of section twenty-six there shall be a
46 board composed of the mayor of the city, if any, and
47 the chairman of the board of selectmen of each of
48 the towns comprising said district, which board
49 shall appoint, fix the compensation of, and may
50 remove the director of veterans' services of said
51 district; may appoint, fix the salary of and may
52 remove a deputy or assistant to such director, if in
53 the opinion of said board such an officer is necessary;
54 may determine the proportion of the expenses of
55 said director and assistant and of the department
56 under his charge and apportion the same among the
57 several municipalities comprising such district on
58 the basis of the taxable valuation of said munici-
59 palities as last established by the general court as a
60 basis of apportionment for state and county taxes;
61 and shall promptly thereafter notify the treasurers
62 of said municipalities of such apportionment. Every
63 treasurer so notified shall, annually in December,
64 certify the amount of such apportionment to the
65 board of assessors of his municipality, who shall
66 include such amount in the tax levy of the following
67 year.

68 *Section 28.* In each city and in each town not
69 included in a district established under section
70 twenty-six, and in each such district, there shall be
71 in the department of veterans' services an unpaid
72 advisory board to be appointed, in cities by the
73 mayor, in towns by the board of selectmen, and in
74 districts by the district committee. Said advisory
75 board shall render such assistance to the director of

76 veterans' services of the municipality or district
77 relative to the provisions of this chapter, except as
78 to sections one to twenty-five, inclusive, as said
79 director may request. The state commissioner of
80 veterans' services is hereby authorized and directed
81 to formulate and publish rules and regulations es-
82 tablishing in a general manner the types of persons,
83 relative to business or profession and special skills,
84 who may be elected or appointed to such unpaid
85 advisory boards. Every such advisory board shall
86 consist of not less than five nor more than fifteen
87 residents of the city, town or district, as the case
88 may be.

89 *Section 29.* Said departments shall acquire and
90 have on hand copies of current booklets and other
91 printed matter pertaining to the statutory rights of
92 war veterans provided under state and federal laws.
93 They may call at any time upon any department,
94 board, division or commission of the commonwealth
95 for such assistance as may be necessary in carrying
96 out their functions. They shall also work in close
97 co-ordination with existing federal agencies estab-
98 lished for the aid of war veterans, and they shall
99 enlist the support of hospitals within their respective
100 communities or districts for carrying out the pur-
101 poses of sections twenty-six to thirty, inclusive.

102 *Section 30.* Departments established and main-
103 tained under sections twenty-six to thirty, inclusive,
104 shall be under the general direction of the state
105 commissioner of veterans' services, and they shall be
106 physically located independently of, and separate
107 and apart from, any other public or private agency,
108 board, bureau, social agency or society.

1 SECTION 2. Every person who, on the effective
2 date of this act, is a city or town officer authorized
3 to disburse state or military aid, as provided by the
4 first sentence of section eighteen of chapter one
5 hundred and fifteen of the General Laws, as amended,
6 shall, upon such effective date, become the director
7 of veterans' services for such city or town and shall
8 serve as such until other provision is made under
9 authority of section twenty-six of said chapter one
10 hundred and fifteen, inserted therein by section one
11 of this act; provided, that if such officer is on said
12 effective date serving a definite term of office he may
13 continue to serve therein until the expiration of
14 such term unless sooner removed for cause.

