

The Commonwealth of Massachusetts

MILITARY DIVISION
THE ADJUTANT GENERAL'S OFFICE
905 COMMONWEALTH AVENUE
BOSTON, MASSACHUSETTS 02215, OCTOBER 31, 1980

The Honorable Michael Joseph Connolly, *Secretary of the Commonwealth*
State House, Room 74C, Boston, Massachusetts 02133

Dear Mr. Secretary: In compliance with Section 33 of Chapter 30 of the General Laws, attached herewith are eight (8) legislative proposals of the Military Division for the 1981 Session of the General Court.

Very truly yours,

VAHAN VARTANIAN
Major General, MassARNG
The Adjutant General

The Commonwealth of Massachusetts

In the Year One Thousand Nine Hundred and Eighty-One.

*LEGISLATIVE RECOMMENDATIONS OF THE
MILITARY DIVISION
1981 SESSION*

1. AN ACT RELATIVE TO THE COMMONWEALTH ARMORY.

This legislation seeks to clarify the basic bill which appears to separate the commonwealth armory building from the rest of the complex, which, we are informed, was not the intent of the sponsors of the original legislation.

If by the terms of the bill we only convey the Armory building, leaving the balance of the area intact, it is our opinion that the Commonwealth will suffer substantial financial loss because sale of a part of the property would leave the balance of the complex isolated and of much less value and use.

This legislation further provides that the Armory Commission will be able to provide replacement facilities expeditiously.

Further, the time constraints in the original bill are unrealistic. Sections 1 and 2 of this submission will remedy this condition.

2. AN ACT RELATIVE TO AUTHORIZING THE ADJUTANT GENERAL TO ORDER OFFICERS TO ACTIVE DUTY.

This bill changes the present law by removing the limitation that the three officers must serve at Division Headquarters and permitting a broader and more effective utilization of personnel.

This bill permits The Adjutant General to assign these three officers to areas affected by personnel cuts in the past several years and provides protection to these individuals by allowing them to continue employment in the National Guard in the same manner as those under Section 15 of the General Laws.

3. AN ACT RELATIVE TO THE RETIREMENT OF CERTAIN EMPLOYEES OF THE MILITARY DIVISION OF THE COMMONWEALTH.

Of the nine (9) employees covered, six (6) employees are covered under Section 15 and three (3) are under Section 18 of Chapter 33 of the General Laws.

The nature of the duties of the members of the military forces of the Commonwealth is mostly akin to those covered under Group 4. Much of their planning relates to law enforcement responsibilities in the case of natural disasters, such as blizzards, hurricanes and the like, and in the case of civil disturbances, such as in the case of demonstrations or threats of riot.

Those under Section 18 are further penalized because their positions require federal recognition, placing them under the provisions of the Reserve Officers Personnel Act (ROPA), which requires early retirement at either age 53 or 55; thus precluding full annuity retirement benefits.

4. AN ACT RELATIVE TO THE MASSACHUSETTS NATIONAL GUARD EDUCATIONAL ASSISTANCE PROGRAM.

This legislation seeks to rescind Section 2 which provides that the National Guard Educational Assistance Program will cease on July 1, 1983.

This program is open to all members of the Massachusetts National Guard and is especially beneficial to those among us who cannot afford to attend college. It prepares young people, otherwise unqualified, to become officers and non-commissioned officers.

At the present time, 749 members are participating, approximately 6 percent of our total complement, an extremely successful program. Projections indicate that there will be a steady increase in numbers and percentage.

We are in the process of receiving from the schools printouts of members attending and their status so that we may effectively monitor the program.

The education program has been a very effective recruiting tool, and our steady rise in strength is attributable in large measure to it.

5. AN ACT PROVIDING PAY AND ALLOWANCES FOR OFFICERS AND ENLISTED PERSONNEL OF THE ARMED FORCES OF THE COMMONWEALTH.

This legislation changes the present status in one respect only, providing the troops with a minimum of \$50 for a 24-hour day of state active duty instead of the present \$30.

The principal beneficiaries will be lower ranked enlisted personnel, who generally suffer financial hardship while serving during emergencies. The amount sought is *not* in addition to the established rate of pay.

6. AN ACT RELATIVE TO ANNUAL ALLOWANCES TO ORGANIZATIONS AND UNITS OF THE ARMED FORCES OF THE COMMONWEALTH. AMENDING SECTION 97 OF GENERAL LAWS CHAPTER 33.

The present statute provides monetary allowances to specific units and organizations of the armed forces of the Commonwealth. It is now obsolete. Due to past military reorganizations by the Department of the Army, some of these organizations no longer exist, and recurring reorganization makes it impossible to devise a formula which would remain effective for long.

This legislation provides that these changes will be met promptly by changing the regulations which this legislation requires the Governor to promulgate.

7. AN ACT PROVIDING FOR THE ADMINISTERING OF OATHS.

This legislation gives "warrant officers" and officers of the United States the authority to administer oaths. This is required for the convenience of the national guard and to avoid frequent delays in the enlistment of enlisted personnel. We make extensive use of the Armed Forces Entrance and Examination Stations, which are operated by the United States armed forces, for physical examinations. This bill will enable officers of the United States to administer oaths of enlistment if no officer of the national guard is present.

8. AN ACT AUTHORIZING THE GOVERNOR TO PRESENT THE MASSACHUSETTS MEDAL OF VALOR FOR ITS PLACEMENT IN THE ARLINGTON NATIONAL CEMETERY HALL OF HEROES.

This legislation is self-explanatory. There is no present authority to have the Massachusetts Medal of Valor in the Hall of Heroes at the Arlington National Cemetery.

