



REPRESENTATIVE THOMAS NELSON ASSEMBLY MAJORITY LEADER

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MAJORITY LEADER NELSON HAILS PASSAGE OF MEASURES FOR VETERANS ASSEMBLY EXPANDS PROGRAM FOR NEEDY VETERANS, APPROVES BILLS HONORING VETERANS

MADISON -- Assembly Majority Leader Thomas Nelson (D-Kaukauna) announced Assembly passage of several key measures for Wisconsin veterans, including SB-39, the Veterans Assistance Grant Eligibility Modification Bill. The bill will expand access to the Assistance to Needy Veterans Grant Program, which provides financial assistance to needy veterans and their families to pay for basic expenses like health care.

In order to qualify for the program, veterans must have a household income that is 130% of the federal poverty level or less, and their liquid assets cannot total over \$1,000. Many veterans carry a small life insurance policy to cover the costs of their burial, and under current law, such policies count against the \$1,000 maximum. In order to be eligible for the grant program, a veteran with a modest life insurance policy would be forced to cash in that policy and spend the money. The measure passed today amends the eligibility requirements by removing the cash value of life insurance policies from the list of assets that are considered when determining eligibility.

"No veteran should have to choose between a life insurance policy that will allow them to be laid to rest with dignity and basic expenses like medical care," said Rep. Nelson. "Inserting basic fairness into the eligibility guidelines for this program is the least we can do for our veterans who have served honorably."

The Assembly also approved bills honoring veterans of the Korean and Vietnam wars, and a bill expanding access to reduced fee annual fishing licenses for disabled veterans. Once the measures are signed by the Governor, July 27th will be designated as Korean War Armistice Day and March 29th will be designated as Vietnam Veterans Day. All four measures passed the Assembly on a strong bipartisan vote.

"It is critical that we honor and thank the men and women who have bravely served our state and nation," continued Rep. Nelson. "Designating days of remembrance is a small, but important gesture, to ensure that we never forget those who made the ultimate sacrifice in the name of the freedoms we enjoy today."

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