

**ONE HUNDRED FOURTH LEGISLATURE - SECOND SESSION - 2016**  
**COMMITTEE STATEMENT**  
**LB754**

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**Hearing Date:** Thursday February 11, 2016  
**Committee On:** Government, Military and Veterans Affairs  
**Introducer:** Crawford  
**One Liner:** Create the Commission on Military and Veteran Affairs

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**Roll Call Vote - Final Committee Action:**  
Advanced to General File with amendment(s)

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**Vote Results:**

<b>Aye:</b>	7	Senators Bloomfield, Craighead, Garrett, Groene, Hansen, Larson, Murante
<b>Nay:</b>		
<b>Absent:</b>	1	Senator McCoy
<b>Present Not Voting:</b>		

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**Verbal Testimony:**

**Proponents:**

Senator Sue Crawford  
John Hilgert  
Paul Cohen

Rita Sanders  
Jennifer Creager  
Bruce Bohrer

**Opponents:**

**Neutral:**

Gregory Holloway

**Representing:**

Introducer  
Nebraska Department of Veterans' Affairs  
Military Officers Association of America, Heartland of America (NE) Chapter  
City of Bellevue  
Greater Omaha Chamber  
Lincoln Chamber of Commerce

**Representing:**

**Representing:**

Disabled American Veterans

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**Summary of purpose and/or changes:**

LB 754 Creates the Commission on Military and Veterans Affairs as follows:

Section 1 defines voting and ex officio members of the commission, and enumerates procedures for their appointment and approval.

Section 2 defines the authority of the commission, which includes the authority to:

- Receive and administer funds,
  - Address matters of military significance in Nebraska,
  - Advise the Governor, Legislature, Congressional Delegation, and other governmental officials where appropriate,
  - Conduct enumerated activities relating to economic development,
  - Conduct enumerated activities relating to the welfare of veterans, and
  - Perform other enumerated functions.
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Section 3 establishes the organization and meeting procedures for the commission.

Section 4 defines and restricts compensation for members of the commission.

Section 5 enables the commission to hire staff as specified.

Section 6 requires the commission to prepare an annual report on the military assets of Nebraska, including installations and missions, and their economic impact.

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**Explanation of amendments:**

In section 1, the amendment redefines the nonvoting, ex officio members of the committee to include only the following: (1) The chair of the State Committee of Employer Support of the Guard and Reserve, (2) the commander of the 55th Wing of the Air Combat Command or his or her designee, (3) the commander of the United States Strategic Command or his or her designee, and (4) the commander of the 557th Weather Wing of the United States Air Force or his or her designee.

In section 2, the amendment makes the following changes: The bill authorizes the commission to expend funds for the purpose of establishing a partnership with various enumerated entities to achieve its purposes of conducting an analysis of changes to the mission, military force structure, and alignment of the United States Department of Defense and improving employment opportunities for former members of the military and their families. The amendment removes the Department of Economic Development from those entities. The amendment also makes technical changes to section 2.

In section 3, the amendment removes certain organizational and operational requirements imposed on the commission. Under the amendment, the requirements are limited to the election of a chairperson, vice-chairperson, and secretary, a minimum meeting requirement of two annual meetings, and a notice requirement for all meetings as prescribed.

In section 4, the amendment removes the fifty dollar per diem payment to ex officio members of the commission.

In section 5, the amendment removes the provision for an executive director of the commission contained in the original bill. Instead, the amendment creates a military affairs liaison to be housed in the Department of Veterans' Affairs, and makes provisions for that position.

In section 6, the amendment requires the report submitted to the Legislature, Governor, and commanding officers of military bases in Nebraska to be submitted electronically.

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John Murante, Chairperson