

COUNTY OF EL DORADO

330 Fair Lane
Placerville, CA 95667
(530) 621-5390
(530) 622-3645 Fax

JAMES S. MITRISIN
Clerk of the Board



BOARD OF SUPERVISORS

RON "MIK" MIKULACO
District I
RAY NUTTING
District II
BRIAN K. VEERKAMP
District III
RON BRIGGS
District IV
NORMA SANTIAGO
District V

February 25, 2014

The Honorable Assembly member Quirk-Silva
Chair, Assembly Veterans Affairs Committee
State Capitol, Room 5175
Sacramento, CA 95814

RE: Letter of Support for AB 2703– County Veterans Service Officers

Dear Chairman Quirk-Silva:

On behalf of the veterans of El Dorado County, I am writing to support Assembly Bill 2703 for increased local assistance funding for County Veterans Services Officers (CVSOs). If enacted, this bill would increase the amount of State assistance to CVSOs from approximately \$2.6 million to \$6 million statewide.

Currently, counties provide approximately 84% of the cost associated with services provided by CVSOs. The other 16% is provided by the State through the California Department of Veterans Affairs (CDVA). The State currently allocates \$2.6 million per year to be distributed among the 56 California counties with CVSOs. This "Local Assistance" allocation has remained nearly unchanged for the past 19 years regardless of SB 608 which requires consideration of allocations up to \$5 million and SB 419 which requires consideration of allocations up to \$11 million.

According to the CDVA, from 1995 to 2011, the CVSOs have obtained \$3.65 billion in federal veterans benefits for California veterans and their dependents. This has been achieved at a cost of only \$36.2 million from the State General Fund. This reflects a return of more than \$91 for every \$1 the State allocates to CVSOs. The return only reflects the actual monetary benefits qualified for in a given year, yet most veterans and their dependents continue to receive those benefits for the rest of their life. Furthermore, also not reflected in the annual CDVA report are Medi-Cal cost avoidance savings incurred as a result of CVSOs qualifying and shifting veterans away from Medi-Cal onto a federal veterans program.

Presently there are approximately 17,000 veterans residing El Dorado County. This number does not include dependents or surviving family members. Passage of AB 2703 would make it possible to expand services to thousands of underserved veterans and their dependents.

Honorable State Representative

RE: El Dorado County Support for AB 2703 – county Veterans Service Officers

Page 2

Therefore, El Dorado County strongly supports AB 2703. If you have any questions regarding this matter, please contact William E. Schultz, Interim Director, County Veterans Affairs Office at (530)621-7505.

Sincerely,

Norma Santiago

Chairwoman

El Dorado County Board of Supervisors

cc:

The Honorable Mark Leno - Chair, Senate Budget Committee

The Honorable Nancy Skinner - Chair, Assembly Budget Committee

The Honorable Richard Roth - Chair, Senate Budget Subcommittee #4

The Honorable Tom Daly - Chair, Assembly Budget Subcommittee #4