Dear Friend,

Taking care of our active military members and veterans is a top priority of mine. While we proudly make strides to ensure the best possible care for our military heroes, it is incumbent upon us to continue finding ways to keep the promise to our veterans and military personnel.

All active military members and veterans deserve peace of mind knowing we are working to improve their quality of life. Supporting our men and women in uniform is the least we can do to honor their selfless service.

That's why I helped pass crucial legislation that will keep the promise to those who proudly serve our nation and those who honorably served in the past.

Within this newsletter, you will find information on the most recent House legislation as it relates to our military heroes. Please do not hesitate to contact my office with any questions or concerns.

Sincerely,

Jim

JIM LOWER
State Representative

(517) 373-0834 • JamesLower@house.mi.gov
www.RepLower.com

VETERANS UPDATE 2017

STATE REPRESENTATIVE JIM LOWER

FOR SERVING OUR COUNTRY AND PROTECTING OUR FREEDOMS!

THANK YOU

STATE REPRESENTATIVE JIM LOWER

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VETERANS UPDATE 2017

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Leonard supports Veterans Training Service Dog Pilot Program

I wholeheartedly support legislation to give veterans with disabilities an opportunity to help train service dogs.

Man’s best friend is known as a great companion for those visually impaired, prone to seizures, dealing with diabetes or overwhelmed with anxiety. Service dogs are also crucial for our veterans suffering from post-traumatic stress injury.

House Bill 4843 creates the Veterans Training Service Dog Pilot Program within the Department of Military and Veterans Affairs. A fund for the program would also be created within the Michigan Department of Treasury.

The pilot program would run for five years and authorize the department to operate it directly or through a qualified nonprofit.

This bill benefits the veteran in need of a helpful companion and the service dog. Including veterans in the training process will create a better connection with the dog and allow dogs to be trained more specifically to the veteran’s needs.

We need more veterans on staff at state veterans homes

Because veterans have a better understanding of the needs of other veterans, I support legislation requiring all state veterans homes to use veteran preference employment policies.

Michigan currently has two state veterans homes, one in Grand Rapids and one in Marquette. Since the Grand Rapids veterans home works with a private vendor, there is no requirement to use veteran preference practices. House Bill 4048 would require all veterans homes to employ veteran preference practices with future private vendor contracts.

Private vendors would be required to use veteran preference employment practices in order to satisfy a contract with the home. Interested parties agree that there is a benefit to having veterans employed at the homes to assist other veterans.

Veterans treat each other with the utmost respect. Anyone who has served in the military knows the bond between military personnel exists long after their service ends. This is what’s best for our country’s heroes; ensuring we provide them with opportunities for employment and financial security.

National Guard members are better protected under legislation

I am supporting legislation to ensure members of the state’s National Guard always have the ability to properly protect themselves while on National Guard property.

There are approximately 400 active service personnel operating in our state armories, recruitment centers and other various military facilities. As federal employees, the Department of Defense prohibits these individuals from carrying a firearm for defense purposes.

However, Michigan’s Department of Military and Veterans Affairs has recently permitted Michigan National Guard members – including full- and part-time service personnel – who hold concealed pistol licenses to carry personally owned firearms in all places now allowed under federal and state law.

House Bill 4474 accepts the current practice to ensure that members of the state’s National Guard have the option to properly arm and protect themselves if they choose.

For their own personal protection and the protection of others, a trained member of the National Guard should be able to carry a weapon on National Guard property.