

State Representative

Anna Wills

491 State Office Building
100 Rev. Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. BLVD
St. Paul, MN 55155
651-296-4306



Anna Wills



f /repanawills

District 57B: Dakota County

rep.anna.wills@house.mn

Working for Our Veterans

Veterans' issues are one topic at the State Capitol that are truly non-partisan. Democrats and Republicans alike are committed each session to honoring the service and the sacrifice to our nation by our veterans.

During the 2016 Session, legislation was signed into law providing a state income tax exemption on benefits earned by 18,000 military retirees currently living in Minnesota. Veterans who missed this exemption when filing their 2016 taxes have up to 3 years to file an amended return to take advantage of this new tax exemption.

Here is a look at veterans' related legislation and provisions that were passed and signed into law during the 2017 Legislative Session:

Authored by Rep. Wills

- Renamed the bridge over U.S. Highway 52 (Brandel Drive) in Coates to the "Corporal Benjamin S. Kopp Bridge" in memory of Corporal Kopp.

State Government

- \$1.449 million operational funding increase above base for Veterans Affairs Department programs and services to veterans.
- Increases Support Our Troops individual grant eligibility amounts from \$2,000 to \$4,000.
- Authorizes Support Our Troops grant funds for veterans spouses at State Veterans Cemeteries.
- Requires private veterans benefits service providers to disclose that veterans may be entitled to the same services at no charge from their Veterans Service Office.
- \$1 million appropriation to fund new Duluth Veterans Cemetery.
- \$500,000 to the Humanities Center for Veterans Defense Project grants.
- \$700,000 for Veterans Journey Home grants.

Taxes

- Property tax rate for congressionally chartered veterans' organizations reduced to 1%.
- Surviving spouse of veteran who died after Dec. 31, 2011 may apply for homestead market valuation if the veteran qualified for, but did not collect, 100% total disability benefit.
- Annual application for disabled veterans homestead exclusion eliminated.

Environment

- Free annual state park permits for active military, reserve and disabled veterans.
- Bear hunting permit preference given to resident of a Veterans Home.



Working for Our Veterans

Legacy

- \$650,000 for public television's Vietnam: Minnesota Remembers project.
- \$250,000 for Minnesota Medal of Honor Memorial.
- \$278,000 for Veterans Rest Camp.
- \$222,000 for Camp Legionville.
- \$50,000 for Waseca County Veterans Memorial.
- \$30,000 for Rice County Veterans Memorial.
- \$200,000 to the Minnesota Humanities Center for the Veterans Voices program.

Capital Investments

- \$2,500,000 to the Department of Military Affairs for asset preservation of military affairs facilities statewide.
- \$3,521,000 to the Department of Military Affairs for construction of a joint emergency railroad and pipelines emergency training response facility at Camp Ripley.
- \$5,000,000 to the Department of Veterans Affairs for asset preservation of the State's Veterans Homes.
- \$7,851,000 to the Department of Veterans Affairs for the Minneapolis Veterans Home Historic Truss Bridge.
- \$30,000 to the Department of Veterans Affairs for a Rice County Veterans Memorial.

Public Safety

- Expansion of impersonation of military officer ("stolen valor") to include any military member for the purpose of financial gain.
- \$200,000 in grants for training safety personnel in de-escalation techniques.

Higher Education

- \$250,000 to continue the veterans-to-agriculture pilot program established in 2015.

Jobs

- \$400,000 for the Helmets to Hard Hats National Guard, reserve, active military and veterans' building and construction apprenticeship program.

Miscellaneous

- County boards authorized to appropriate money for veterans memorial anywhere in county.