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State of Minnesota HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

EIGHTY-FIFTH SESSION

HOUSE FILE No. 1612

March 1, 2007

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The bill was read for the first time and referred to the Committee on Agriculture, Rural Economies and Veterans Affairs

1.1 A bill for an act
1.2 relating to the military; improving access to counseling services for returning
1.3 soldiers and veterans; requiring a report; appropriating money.

1.4 BE IT ENACTED BY THE LEGISLATURE OF THE STATE OF MINNESOTA:

1.5 Section 1. APPROPRIATIONS.

1.6 Subdivision 1. Veterans affairs. The sums in this section are appropriated from the
1.7 general fund to the commissioner of veterans affairs for the fiscal years designated and
1.8 for the purposes specified. The commissioner may, where practicable, use these amounts
1.9 to make grants to veterans service organizations and to county veterans service offices
1.10 for the stated purposes. These are onetime appropriations.

1.11 Subd. 2. Hotline for veterans counseling referral. For a telephone hotline and
1.12 operator to refer soldiers and veterans to all available local, state, and federal counseling
1.13 services at all practicable hours of need.

1.14 \$ 2008

1.15 \$ 2009

1.16 Subd. 3. Local veterans counseling services. For the provision of local counseling
1.17 services in underserved areas of the state having significant population concentrations of
1.18 service members and veterans.

1.19 \$ 2008

1.20 \$ 2009

1.21 Sec. 2. NEEDS ASSESSMENT REQUIRED.

2.1 By November 1, 2007, the commissioner of veterans affairs and the Adjutant General
2.2 of the National Guard shall jointly report to the chair and ranking minority member of
2.3 each committee in the senate and house of representatives with jurisdiction over the policy
2.4 or finance of veterans affairs and military affairs regarding the psychological status and
2.5 needs of soldiers and veterans returning to Minnesota after having served in support of
2.6 contingency operations for Operation Enduring Freedom and Operation Iraqi Freedom.
2.7 The report must provide the best relevant insights into and advice concerning how to
2.8 most effectively provide the psychological support services determined to be needed
2.9 by those soldiers and veterans.

2.10 **EFFECTIVE DATE.** This section is effective July 1, 2007.