

A bill for an act
relating to the military; improving access to psychological counseling services
for returning soldiers and veterans; requiring a report; appropriating money.
BE IT ENACTED BY THE LEGISLATURE OF THE STATE OF MINNESOTA:

Section 1. **APPROPRIATIONS.**

Subdivision 1. Veterans affairs. The sums in this section are appropriated from the
general fund to the commissioner of veterans affairs for the fiscal years designated and
for the purposes specified. The commissioner may, where practicable, use these amounts
to make grants to local providers of psychological counseling services for the stated
purposes. These are onetime appropriations.

Subd. 2. Hotline for veterans counseling referral. For a staffed telephone
hotline and operator to refer soldiers and veterans to all available local, state, and federal
counseling services at all practicable hours of need. The commissioner must broadly
and repeatedly publish the number and availability of this telephone hotline and must
encourage local media and service providers to publish it as well.

\$			<u>2008</u>
\$			<u>2009</u>

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

\$			<u>2008</u>
\$			<u>2009</u>

2.1 Sec. 2. **NEEDS ASSESSMENT REQUIRED.**

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

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