
BE IT ENACTED BY THE LEGISLATURE OF THE STATE OF MISSISSIPPI:

SECTION 1. The following sum, or so much thereof as may be necessary, is hereby appropriated out of any money in the State General Fund not otherwise appropriated, for the purpose of defraying the expenses and paying salaries of the Veterans Affairs Board for the fiscal year beginning July 1, 2003, and ending June 30, 2004. $ 1,327,489.00.

SECTION 2. The following sum, or so much thereof as may be necessary, is hereby appropriated out of any money in the special fund in the State Treasury to the credit of the Veterans Affairs Board which is comprised of special source funds collected by or otherwise available to the board, for the support and maintenance of said board for the fiscal year beginning July 1, 2003, and ending June 30, 2004. $ 25,862,869.00.

SECTION 3. The following sum, or so much thereof as may be necessary, is hereby appropriated out of any money in the Health Care Expendable Fund not otherwise appropriated, for the purpose of defraying the expenses of the Veterans' Affairs Board for the fiscal year beginning July 1, 2003, and ending June 30, 2004. $ 700,000.00.

SECTION 4. With the funds appropriated under the provisions of Sections 1, 2 and 3, the following positions are authorized:

AUTHORIZED POSITIONS:

Permanent: Full Time............ 80
Part Time............ 0
With the funds herein appropriated, it is the intention of the Legislature that it shall be the agency's responsibility to make certain that funds required to be appropriated for "Personal Services" for Fiscal Year 2005 do not exceed Fiscal Year 2004 funds appropriated for that purpose, unless programs or positions are added to the agency's Fiscal Year 2005 budget by the Mississippi Legislature. Based on data provided by the Legislative Budget Office, the State Personnel Board shall determine and publish the projected annual cost to fully fund all appropriated positions in compliance with the provisions of this act. It shall be the responsibility of the agency head to insure that no single personnel action increases this projected annual cost and/or the Fiscal Year 2004 appropriation for "Personal Services" when annualized. If, at the end of any calendar month, the State Personnel Board determines that the agency has taken action(s) which would cause the agency to exceed this projected annual cost or the Fiscal Year 2004 "Personal Services" appropriated level, when annualized, then only those actions which reduce the projected annual cost and/or the appropriation requirement will be processed by the State Personnel Board until such time as the requirements of this provision are met.

Any transfers or escalations shall be made in accordance with the terms, conditions and procedures established by law.

No general funds authorized to be expended herein shall be used to replace federal funds and/or other special funds which are being used for salaries authorized under the provisions of this act and which are withdrawn and no longer available.

SECTION 5. Of the funds appropriated under the provisions of Section 1, and authorized for expenditure in Section 3, funds in the amount of Two Hundred Fifty Thousand Dollars ($250,000.00) are provided to defray the cost of providing care to
indigent/low-income Mississippi veterans and the non-veteran surviving spouses of Mississippi veterans if the surviving spouse was a resident of a state veterans home at the time of the veteran's death and who, subsequent to the veteran's death, meets the indigent/low-income criteria established by the State Veterans Affairs Board, in the state veterans homes. It is the intention of the Legislature that the provision pertaining to use of indigent/low-income surviving spouses be retroactive for any such period, prior to the effective date of this act, that a current surviving spouse may have met the criteria. This section and its provisions shall be known and cited as the "Hilton R. 'Jack' Vance Act of 1997."

**SECTION 6.** Of the funds appropriated under the provisions of Section 2, Nine Hundred Forty-five Thousand Seven Hundred Sixty-five Dollars ($945,765.00) shall be derived from the Budget Contingency Fund created in Section 27-103-301, Mississippi Code of 1972.

**SECTION 7.** It is the intention of the Legislature that the Veterans Affairs Board shall maintain complete accounting and personnel records related to the expenditure of all funds appropriated under the provisions of this act and that such records shall be in the same format and level of details as maintained for Fiscal Year 2003. It is further the intention of the Legislature that the budget request for Fiscal Year 2005 shall be submitted to the Joint Legislative Budget Committee in a format and level of detail comparable to the format and level of detail provided during the Fiscal Year 2004 budget request process.

**SECTION 8.** The money herein appropriated shall be paid by the State Treasurer out of any money in the State Treasury to the credit of the proper fund or funds as set forth in this act, upon warrants issued by the State Fiscal Officer; and the State Fiscal Officer shall issue his warrants upon requisitions signed by the proper person, officer or officers in the manner provided by law.
SECTION 9. This act shall take effect and be in force from and after July 1, 2003.