

HB 309 -- Veterans Court Program

Sponsor: Solon

This bill establishes a Military Veterans and Servicemembers Court Program for specified veterans and servicemembers. The bill:

(1) Authorizes the presiding judge of each judicial circuit to create the program and provide criteria for entry into the program. Those eligible would be veterans and servicemembers who are suffering from a military related mental illness, traumatic brain injury, substance abuse disorder or psychological problems stemming from military service in a combat theater;

(2) Requires the court to give preference to specified treatment programs;

(3) Specifies the felonies which that make a person ineligible to enter into the program;

(4) Creates a pretrial veterans' and servicemembers' treatment intervention program. The bill establishes the requirements for a defendant to be voluntarily admitted to the pretrial program and specifies the exceptions to admission. The charges are dismissed following a defendant's completion of the pretrial intervention program and may be expunged under certain circumstances;

(5) Creates a misdemeanor pretrial veterans' treatment intervention program. The bill establishes the requirements for voluntary admission to the program. The misdemeanor charges are dismissed upon completion of the program and may be expunged under certain circumstances;

(6) Exempts treatment services provided by the United States Department of Veterans Affairs from specified contract requirements;

(7) Authorizes a judge to impose a condition of probation requiring the probationer to participate in a treatment program capable of treating his or her disorder. The bill requires the court to give preference to certain treatment programs; and

(8) The Department of Corrections is not required to spend state funds to implement these provisions.