

**MINUTES
of the
FOURTH MEETING
of the
MILITARY AND VETERANS' AFFAIRS COMMITTEE**

**September 13, 2022
Raton Convention Center
Raton**

The fourth meeting of the Military and Veterans' Affairs Committee was called to order by Representative Harry Garcia, co-chair, on September 13, 2022 at 10:12 a.m. at the Raton Convention Center in Raton.

Present

Rep. Harry Garcia, Co-Chair
Rep. Eliseo Lee Alcon
Sen. Craig W. Brandt
Sen. Shannon D. Pinto

Absent

Sen. Harold Pope, Co-Chair
Sen. Brenda G. McKenna
Rep. Debra M. Sariñana
Rep. Luis M. Terrazas

Advisory Members

Rep. Stefani Lord
Rep. Jane E. Powdrell-Culbert

Rep. Rachel A. Black
Sen. William F. Burt
Rep. Randal S. Crowder
Rep. Meredith A. Dixon
Rep. D. Wonda Johnson
Sen. Michael Padilla
Rep. Randall T. Pettigrew
Rep. G. Andrés Romero

Staff

Jeret Fleetwood, Project Coordinator, Legislative Council Service (LCS)
Nancy Martinez, Research Assistant, LCS

Guests

The guest list is in the meeting file.

Handouts

Handouts and other written testimony are in the meeting file and posted on the legislature's website.

References to Webcast

The time reference noted next to each agenda item in this document is cross-referenced to the webcast of the committee meeting, which can be found at www.nmlegis.gov, under the "Webcast" tab. The presentations made and committee discussions for the agenda items can be found on the recorded webcast for this meeting.

Tuesday, September 13

Welcome and Introductions

Representative Garcia welcomed the committee members and audience. Committee members and staff introduced themselves.

Adult Transformative Development Institute (10:15 a.m.)

Dr. Eliberto Calderon, chief executive officer (CEO), Adult Transformative Development Institute, introduced Richard Vigliano, retired contractor and developer, who gave a presentation on the Adult Transformative Development Institute. The institute aims to address the roadblocks to veteran success as well as the start-up for a veterans retreat program. The presentation can be found here:

<https://www.nmlegis.gov/handouts/MVAC%20091322%20Item%201%20Adult%20Transformative%20Development%20Institute.pdf>.

Veterans' Housing Issues (11:05 a.m.)

Isidro "Izzy" Hernandez, executive director and CEO, New Mexico Mortgage Finance Authority (MFA), introduced Rebecca Velarde, senior director of policy and planning, MFA, and Ted Chavez, research and development manager, MFA, who presented an overview of the MFA and the status of housing challenges for active military service members and veterans. The presentation can be found here:

<https://www.nmlegis.gov/handouts/MVAC%20091322%20Item%202%20Veterans'%20Housing%20Issues.pdf>.

New Mexico Military Veteran Leadership Council (12:01 p.m.)

Martin Gallegos, president, Enlisted Association, New Mexico National Guard, and legislative chair person, New Mexico Military Veteran Leadership Council, told committee members that veterans make up approximately 8.4% of New Mexico's population. Mr. Gallegos said that there are three major issues the council would like to address: 1) veteran suicide prevention; 2) veteran homelessness; and 3) making the tax exemption of military retirement service pay permanent rather than letting it sunset in 2025-2026. Mr. Gallegos said that he would like to see a reintroduction of House Joint Resolutions 6 and 7 from the 2022 legislative session.

National Veterans Wellness and Healing Center (1:37 p.m.)

Chuck Howe, founder and director, National Veterans Wellness and Healing Center, introduced the board of directors of the National Veterans Wellness and Healing Center. He said that the center's mission is to help veterans and their spouses, partners or support persons who may be suffering with post-traumatic stress disorder. The presentation can be found here:

<https://www.nmlegis.gov/handouts/MVAC%20091322%20Item%204%20National%20Veterans%20Wellness%20and%20Healing%20Center.pdf>.

Northern New Mexico and Southern Colorado Veteran Issues (2:05 p.m.)

Earl Schmidt, representative, Las Animas County Veteran Services, made recommendations and suggestions, such as further conversation with the Department of Veteran Services between New Mexico and Colorado, for shared services to offset some of the assistance needed for veterans. While the federal Honoring our PACT Act of 2022, which was recently signed by the president of the United States, includes 28 presumptive services for veterans to be treated, Mr. Schmidt said that there needs to be more collaborative work between both states to further enhance the shared services. He said that by a state mandate, Colorado has to have a veteran service officer in every county. The handout can be found here:

<https://www.nmlegis.gov/handouts/MVAC%20091322%20Item%205%20Norther%20NM%20a%20Southern%20CO%20Veteran%20Issues.pdf>.

David Westphall Veterans Foundation (2:24 p.m.)

Jay Mitchell, president, David Westphall Veterans Foundation, said that the purpose of the David Westphall Veterans Foundation is to honor America's veterans and members of its military service forces by memorializing the sacrifices they have made and by recognizing the sense of duty and the courage they have displayed as they answer their country's call to arms. He said that the board is composed of 13 members and that the number of members has a meaningful purpose. The foundation works through partnerships for funding and has a long-lasting and great relationship with the Veterans' Services Department and the General Services Department.

Adjourn

There being no further business before the committee, the meeting adjourned at 2:42 p.m.