

H&SA

A BILL FOR AN ACT

To amend the Kosrae State Code by inserting a new Chapter 18 under Part III of Title 7, to establish the Office of the U.S. Armed Forces – Active Duty and Veterans Affairs in the State of Kosrae; and for other purposes.

BE IT ENACTED BY THE KOSRAE STATE LEGISLATURE

1 Section 1. Findings and Purpose. The Legislature of Kosrae State finds that there
2 is a critical need to address the welfare, rights, and re-integration of U.S. Armed Forces
3 active duty personnel and veterans residing within the State of Kosrae. The establishment
4 of an Office dedicated to providing support and services to these individuals will
5 strengthen the relationship between Kosrae State and the United States of America and
6 ensure the appropriate allocation of resources. The purposes of this Act are (1) to amend
7 the Kosrae State Code by inserting a new Chapter 18 under Title 7, to establish the Office
8 of the U.S. Armed Forces – Active Duty and Veterans Affairs in the State of Kosrae; (2)
9 Allocate an initial annual budget of \$900,000.00 from the 2023 Compact of Free
10 Association (COFA) Sector Fund, beginning in the Fiscal Year 2024; and (3) Create a
11 mechanism for future funding from unused Kosrae State funds.

12 Section 2. Amendment. A new Chapter 18 under Part III of Title 87 is hereby
13 inserted to read as follows:

14 “Chapter 18. Kosrae Office of the U.S. Armed Forces – Active Duty and Veterans
15 Affairs Act of 2024.”

1 Section 7.1801. Short title. This This Act shall be known as the Kosrae Office of
2 the U.S. Armed Forces Active Duty and Veterans Affairs Establishment Act of
3 2024.

4 Section 7.1802. Establishment of the Office. There is hereby established the Office
5 of the U.S. Armed Forces – Active Duty and Veterans Affairs.

6 Section 7.1803. Responsibilities of the Office. The Office shall be responsible for:

7 (1) Providing support and services to active duty U.S. Armed Forces personnel
8 and veterans residing in Kosrae;

9 (2) Assisting in matters relating to healthcare, education, employment,
10 housing, and benefits for U.S. veterans and active duty personnel;

11 (3) Liaising with relevant U.S. government agencies, including the Department
12 of Veterans Affairs and the Department of Defense, to facilitate services
13 for veterans and active duty members;

14 (4) Promoting public awareness of the rights and benefits available to veterans
15 and active duty personnel;

16 (5) Organizing events, workshops, and outreach initiatives aimed at supporting
17 veterans' re-integration into civilian life.

18 Section 7.1804. Funding.

1 (a). An annual budget of \$900,000.00 shall be obligated from the 2023
2 Compact of Free Association Sector Fund, beginning with the Fiscal Year
3 2024, for the operations and programs of the Office."

4 (b). In addition to the annual budget, additional appropriations for this
5 Office shall be drawn from Kosrae State's annual unused funds, whereby
6 90% of any unused funds from the state's budget shall be allocated to the
7 Office of U.S. Armed Forces Active Duty and Veterans Affairs for future
8 fiscal years.

9 Section 7.1805. Appointment of the Director.

10 (a) The Office shall be led by a Director, who shall oversee its operations
11 and programs;

12 (b) The Director of the Office shall be nominated by the Governor of
13 Kosrae State and shall be subjected to the consent and confirmation of two-
14 thirds (2/3) of the members of the Kosrae State Legislature;

15 (c) The Director shall serve a term of four (4) years and may be
16 reappointed following the same process outlined in this section;

17 (d) The annual salary of the Director is twenty-one thousand nine hundred
18 ninety-five dollars (\$21,995).

19 Section 7.1806. Qualifications of the Director. The Director shall be required to
20 have the following qualifications:

- 1 (a) Demonstrated experience in veterans' affairs or public administration;
2 (b) Knowledge of U.S. military protocols and veterans' benefits programs;
3 (c) Commitment to addressing the needs of veterans and active duty
4 personnel.

5 Section 7.1807. Reporting and Accountability.

- 6 (a) The Office shall submit an annual report to the Governor and the
7 Kosrae State Legislature detailing the services provided, the number of
8 veterans and active duty personnel served, and the financial expenditures
9 for the year.
10 (b) The Office shall be subject to an annual audit to ensure transparency
11 and proper use of allocated funds."

12 Section 3. Effective Date. This Act takes effect upon the approval of the Governor
13 or upon its becoming law without such approval.

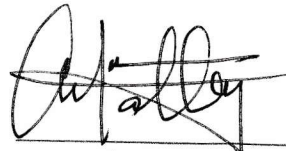
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Date: 09/13/2024

Introduced by:



Artson S. Falley