



BOARD OF SUPERVISORS
AGENDA LETTER

Agenda Number:

Clerk of the Board of Supervisors
105 E. Anapamu Street, Suite 407
Santa Barbara, CA 93101
(805) 568-2240

Department Name: County Executive
Office
Department No.: 012
For Agenda Of: October 19, 2021
Placement: Administrative
Estimated Time: N/A
Continued Item: No
If Yes, date from:
Vote Required:

TO: Board of Supervisors
FROM: Department Director(s) Legislative Program Committee
Contact Info: Jasmine McGinty, Legislative Coordinator
SUBJECT: Letter of Support for Deportation of Veteran's/ MAVNI Program and Justice
for Military Sexual Assault Victims

County Counsel Concurrence

As to form: No

Other Concurrence:

As to form: N/A

Auditor-Controller Concurrence

As to form: No

Recommended Actions:

That the Board of Supervisors:

- a) Approve the attached letter of support and authorize the Chair to sign the letter; and
- b) Determine that the above actions are not a project under the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA), because pursuant to sections 153378(b)(4) and 15378(b)(5) the recommended actions consist of organizational, administrative or fiscal activities of government that will not result in direct or indirect physical damages in the environment.

Summary:

On August 16, 2021, during their regular commission meeting, the Santa Barbara County Veteran's Advisory Commission voted to send documentation on Stopping the Deportation of Veterans and Restoration of the MANVI Program, and Justice for Military Sexual Assault Victims to the Board of Supervisors to ask for support letters for both of the issues. During the September 13, 2021 Legislative Program Committee meeting, the LPC approved this request for support letters on both matters to be considered by the full Board of Supervisors.

Background:

The Santa Barbara County Veterans' Advisory Commission (VAC) is a commission made of up seven members. Five regular members represent each Supervisorial District and appointed by each member of the Board of Supervisors. Additionally, one at-large member from the north county represents the 3rd, 4th, and 5th Supervisorial Districts, nominated by VAC regular membership and appointed by the Board of Supervisors and there is one at-

large member representing the south county and the 1st and 2nd districts. The mission of the VAC is to advise the Board of Supervisors about current and unmet needs of veterans residing in Santa Barbara County and recommend action intended to meet those needs.

A few of the goals and objectives of this commission are to study and advise the Veterans' Service Officer and the Board of Supervisors on special problem areas relating to veterans within the Santa Barbara County and the Tri-County areas and to serve as a liaison between the veteran, our Veterans' Service Officer and the Board of Supervisors in order to improve and enhance their relationships and coordinate community activities. This includes recommending to the Board of Supervisors such action as may enhance the welfare of veterans located in our service area.

Discussion:

SCVAC is requesting support letters on the following two national issues: 1) Stopping the Deportation of Veteran's and Restoration of the MAVNI Program, and 2) Providing support to amend H.R. 4104, Section 2(d), to remove the military entirely from handling claims of sexual assault and instead be referred to local civilian law enforcement. During the August 16, 2021 VAC meeting, the commission voted for these issues to be brought to the attention of the County Board of Supervisors and to request support letters be sent to Congressman Carbajal's office. VAC requests support letters related to the following issues:

Deportation of Veterans/ MAVNI Program

- The Military Accessions Vital to the National Interest Program (MAVNI) was created in 2008 to help foreign nations earn citizenship through military service and it was changed in 2017 to make the process to naturalization more difficult, resulting in the deportation of veterans in the United States.
- VAC is requesting support for the BOS to request legislation which would prevent the deportation of veterans who are permanent legal residents that have not been charged with a felony and instruct the military to honor existing MAVNI contracts.

H.R. 4104/ Military Sexual Assault Victims

- VAC presented information on number of sexual assaults that occur in the military per year, and believes not allowing chain of command to handle military sexual assault claims would bring more justice to those victims often women serving in the military. The military's chain of command consists of the victim's supervisors and management and removing the chain of command would eliminate a male-driven employer bias and reduce retaliation.
- VAC is requesting a letter from the BOS to amend H.R. 4104, Section 2 (d) to remove the military entirely from handling sexual assault claims, and refer to local law enforcement instead.

During the September 13, 2021 Legislative Program Committee, the Committee supported these causes and recommended full Board of Supervisor consideration to submit support letters to Congressman Salud Carbajal's office on behalf of the Veteran's Advisory Board and Santa Barbara County.

Fiscal Impact:

None.

Attachments:

Attachment A – MANVI Program and Justice for Military Assault Victims Support Letter

Attachment B – Information from Veteran's Advisory Board on Justice for Military Sexual Assault Victims and Deportation/ MAVNI Program

Authored by:

Jasmine McGinty, Principal Analyst, County Executive Office