

AB 353 (VOEPEL): VETERANS' PREFERENCES: VOLUNTARY POLICY

POSITION: The Chamber's Defense, Veterans & Military Affairs Committee voted to SUPPORT SB 197 on April 5, 2017.

STATUS: AB 353 was introduced by Assemblymember Randy Voepel on February 8, 2017. The bill passed out of the Assembly Committee on Veterans Affairs was re-referred to the Assembly Committee on Labor & Employment on March 22, 2017.

AT-A-GLANCE

AB 353 establishes a voluntary preference for employers to grant a veteran during hiring. The proposed voluntary preference expands the existing Vietnam War era veteran preference to apply to all veterans, regardless of when they served.

SUMMARY

AB 353 authorizes employers to establish a voluntary veteran preference when hiring. The bill expands upon current state law which gives Vietnam War era veterans preference during the hiring process. AB 353 would open that preference to all veterans, regardless of when they served. Similar laws have been enacted in 37 states across the country.

ANALYSIS

Under the California Fair Employment and Housing Act, employers are authorized to use one's veteran status as a factor in employee selection and are currently able to give special consideration to Vietnam War era veterans.

AB 353 bill seeks to expand upon a relatively outdated and narrow law, and seeks to make it easier for veterans to become employed in the civilian world. Veteran and military support with an emphasis on veteran hiring remains one of the Chamber's priorities. With approximately 2 million veterans residing in the state of California, it is crucial that businesses are afforded the opportunity to have a veteran preference system in place.

SUPPORT

- California State Council of the Society for Human Resource Management (Sponsor)
- American G.I. Forum of California
- AMVETS-Department of California
- Association of County Veterans Services Officers
- California State Commanders Veterans Council
- Department of Defense
- Military Officers Association of America, California Council of Chapters
- San Diego East County Chamber of Commerce
- Society for Human Resource Management
- Vietnam Veterans of America – California State Council

OPPOSITION

None known