

Dept. of Veteran Affairs: Veteran workers targeted as key to \$6.8 million talent attraction initiative

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MADISON — Wisconsin Department of Veterans Affairs (WDVA) Division of Veterans Services Administrator Ken Grant today delivered testimony in support of a \$6.8 million initiative designed to attract and retain workers in Wisconsin. The initiative, part of Governor Scott Walker's Workforce Agenda, expands upon a campaign aimed at attracting Midwestern millennials and Wisconsin alumni.

Grant's testimony was before the Senate Committee on Economic Development, Commerce and Local Government, and he spoke about how Veteran workers would be the key to developing and building a strong workforce throughout Wisconsin through the legislation – Senate Bill 679.

"I think we can all agree that Veterans have qualities that every employer is looking for: leadership, the ability to work as a team leader and a team member, the ability to work under pressure and meet deadlines, the ability to give and follow directions, planning and organizational skills, a commitment to working safely, and flexibility and adaptability," Grant said. "Our goal, through this initiative, is to actively seek out these valuable employees and make sure they know that Wisconsin is a great place for a career and a great place for their family."

When a member of the military leaves active duty, they are required by law to participate in certain pre-transition activities during the final six months of service,

a significant amount dedicated to job preparation and search activities.

The talent attraction campaign would focus specifically on connecting with military personnel during their last six months on active duty at the largest transition centers located around the country. Additionally, WDVA would target certain locations due to the specific training and technical expertise military personnel from that area are known to have such as nurses at Fort Sam Houston, home of the Army medical command or service members with high electronic skillsets at Wright Patterson Air Force Base and Pensacola Naval Air Station.

According to the Department of Defense, enlisted service members have been leaving the military at a rate of roughly 250,000 each year since 2003. The DoD expects that the separation rate will remain high for the next couple of years, with around 230,000 enlisted service members and officers leaving the military each year.

Wisconsin leads the nation in offering Veterans access to programs, benefits and services. Part of the initiative includes promoting Wisconsin as the best place for Veterans to work and live through a national campaign while also collaborating with groups such as Veterans service organizations to increase awareness.

The initiative is in collaboration with the Wisconsin Department of Workforce Development (DWD), the Wisconsin Economic Development Corporation (WEDC) and the Wisconsin Department of Tourism in an effort to show that the state is a destination for personal, social and cultural fulfillment.

For more information on the collaborative talent attraction initiative, read [the fact sheet](#).