

# **North Carolina Needs a Coordinated Strategy to Guide the Changing Landscape of Veterans Programs**

A presentation to the  
Joint Legislative Program Evaluation Oversight Committee

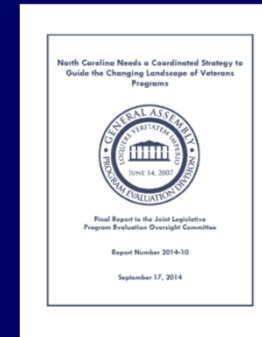
September 17, 2014

Pamela Taylor, Principal Evaluator



# Handouts

- A copy of the report and presentation slides
- Blue two-sided handout
  - Inventory of veterans programs
  - List of other efforts supporting veterans and their families



**Table 6. Veterans Only Programs Spent \$5.3 Billion and Veterans Targeted Programs Spent \$26.4 Billion, FY 2013-14**

Program/Department	Fiscal Year	Spent (\$)	Number of Veterans
Department of Health and Human Services	2013-14	1,200,000,000	1,200,000
Department of Transportation	2013-14	1,000,000,000	1,000,000
Department of Public Safety	2013-14	800,000,000	800,000
Department of Community Development	2013-14	600,000,000	600,000
Department of Agriculture	2013-14	400,000,000	400,000
Department of Education	2013-14	200,000,000	200,000
Department of Natural and Cultural Resources	2013-14	100,000,000	100,000
Department of Labor	2013-14	50,000,000	50,000
Department of Insurance	2013-14	20,000,000	20,000
Department of Administration	2013-14	10,000,000	10,000
Department of Veterans Affairs	2013-14	5,300,000,000	5,300,000
<b>Total</b>	<b>2013-14</b>	<b>5,300,000,000</b>	<b>5,300,000</b>

**North Carolina Offers 22 Educational Initiatives, Benefits, Discounts, and Reduced Recreational Fees to Veterans and Their Families**

Program/Department	Benefit/Discount
Department of Health and Human Services	Priority Access to Health Services
Department of Transportation	Reduced Toll Rates
Department of Public Safety	Reduced License Fees
Department of Community Development	Reduced Rental Rates
Department of Agriculture	Reduced Property Taxes
Department of Education	Reduced Tuition Fees
Department of Natural and Cultural Resources	Reduced Recreational Fees
Department of Labor	Reduced Unemployment Insurance
Department of Insurance	Reduced Insurance Rates
Department of Administration	Reduced Office Supplies
Department of Veterans Affairs	Reduced Medical Services
Department of Transportation	Reduced Toll Rates
Department of Public Safety	Reduced License Fees
Department of Community Development	Reduced Rental Rates
Department of Agriculture	Reduced Property Taxes
Department of Education	Reduced Tuition Fees
Department of Natural and Cultural Resources	Reduced Recreational Fees
Department of Labor	Reduced Unemployment Insurance
Department of Insurance	Reduced Insurance Rates
Department of Administration	Reduced Office Supplies
Department of Veterans Affairs	Reduced Medical Services



# Evaluation Team

Pamela Taylor, Evaluation Lead

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# Study Direction

- Directed by the Joint Legislative Program Evaluation Oversight Committee's 2013–15 Work Plan
- Second report in a three-part series
  - Substance abuse prevention (April 2014)
  - Programs for veterans (September 2014)
  - Substance abuse and treatment (November 2014)

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# Veterans in North Carolina

- Individuals who served in the active military, naval, or air service and who were discharged or released under conditions other than dishonorable
- National Guard members and reservists who meet eligibility requirements for length of service, service commitment, and duty status

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# Overview: Findings

1. State agencies and public higher education institutions operated 23 programs for veterans in FY 2013–14, 11 of which spent \$53.9 million solely on veterans and their families
2. Few programs identified for the inventory track outcomes for veterans and their families
3. North Carolina offers 22 educational initiatives, benefits, discounts, and reduced recreational fees to veterans and their families
4. North Carolina lacks a coordinated and comprehensive strategy to support veterans

# Overview: Recommendations

## The General Assembly should

- establish the Task Force for Veterans, Service Members and their Families in statute
- direct the Task Force to develop and implement a statewide strategic plan
- direct state entities to track and report information on veterans
- establish the Joint Legislative Veteran and Military Service Members Oversight Committee to monitor implementation of the strategic plan



# Background





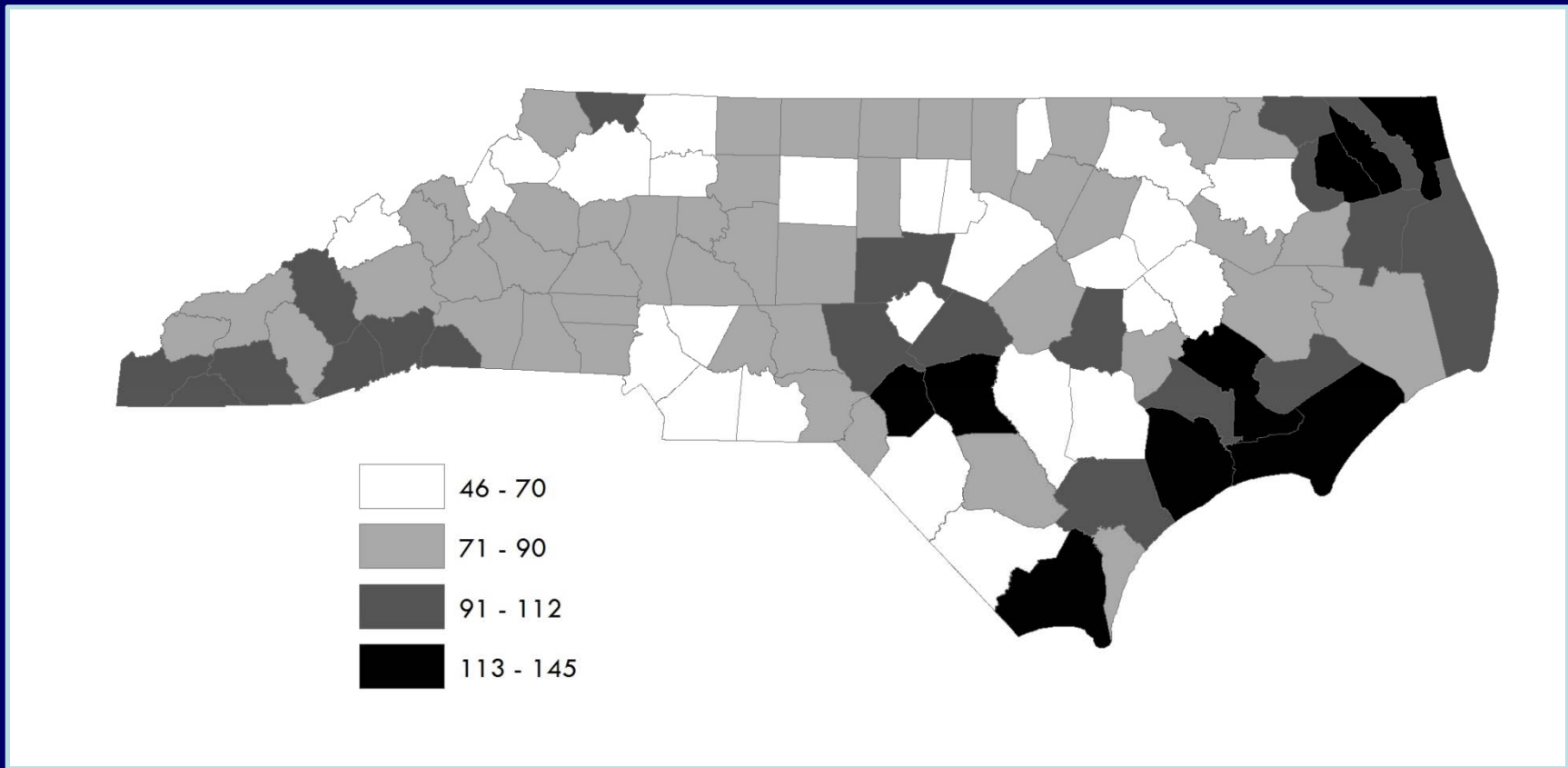
# North Carolina Ranks Ninth in Veteran Population

- U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) estimates that 770,000 veterans live in North Carolina
- Counties with the most veterans per 1,000 residents: Cumberland, Craven, and Onslow

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# Number of North Carolina Veterans per 1,000 Residents



Report p. 4, Exhibit 2



# NC Veterans Received \$5 Billion in VA Benefits in Federal FY 2012–13

Expenditure Category	VA Spending per Veteran	NC Rank
<b>VA compensation and pension</b> (military pension, disability payments, survivor benefits)	\$3,525	9 <sup>th</sup>
<b>Education and job training</b> (GI Bill, employment assistance, and vocational rehabilitation)	\$519	15 <sup>th</sup>
<b>VA medical care</b>	\$2,326	39 <sup>th</sup>
<b>Other VA benefits</b> (burial services, life insurance, and home loan guarantees)	\$216	9 <sup>th</sup>
<b>Total VA expenditures per veteran</b>	<b>\$6,587</b>	<b>20<sup>th</sup></b>

Report pp. 4-5, Exhibit 3, Appendices A & B



# Findings



## **Finding 1.**

**In State Fiscal Year 2013–14, North Carolina state agencies and public higher education institutions operated 23 programs for veterans, 11 of which spent \$53.9 million solely on veterans and their families**

# Inventory of Veterans Programs

- Separate funding stream from any source
- Targeted veterans, NC National Guard members, and their spouses and dependents
- Veteran or NC National Guard status is a requirement for participation or eligibility
- Central focus is on providing a direct benefit to veterans and their families

Report p. 3, Exhibit 1



# 10 State Entities Operated 23 Veterans Programs



Administration (4)



Housing Finance Agency (1)



Public Instruction (1)



University of North Carolina (2)



Commerce (2)



NC Community Colleges (5)



Public Safety (2)



Wildlife Resources Commission (1)



Health and Human Services (4)



State Treasurer (1)

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# Inventory of Veterans Programs

## Veteran-only Programs (11)

- Veterans and their families comprised 100% of participants
- Fiscal Year 2013–14 veteran expenditures: \$53.9 million (36% from federal funds)
- Participation: 70,936\* veterans and their families

## Veteran-targeted Programs (12)

- Veterans and their families targeted but the program served other participants
- Fiscal Year 2013–14 program expenditures: \$103.4 million (86% from federal funds)
- Participation: 20,529\* veterans and their families

\*Veterans may participate in more than one program

Report pp. 9-10, Exhibit 6, Handout





# **Inventory of Veterans Programs by Domain**

- **Educational support (5)**
- **Financial assistance (5)**
- **Physical and behavioral health (5)**
- **Social and emotional well-being (3)**
- **Workforce and economic development (5)**

Report pp. 22-26, Exhibit 11



# Inventory of Veterans Programs

## Educational Support (5)

- DOA Veteran Scholarship program
- Four programs operated by community colleges
  - Center for Military Families and Veterans at Central Piedmont
  - Enhancement Services for Veterans at Pitt
  - Military Affairs Center at Craven
  - Veterans Upward Bound at Central Carolina

## Financial Assistance (5)

- Two DOA programs
  - State Veterans Cemetery and Veteran Service Officer Support
- NC Foreclosure Prevention Fund (Housing Finance Agency)
- NC National Guard Pension Fund (State Treasurer)
- NCCU Veterans Law Clinic

Report pp. 13-18, Exhibit 7



# Inventory of Veterans Programs

## Physical and Behavioral Health (5)

- DOA Veterans State Nursing Homes
- Four programs operated by DHHS/DMHDDASAS
  - Traumatic Brain Injury
  - NC Operation Recovery
  - Substance Abuse Services Initiative for NC National Guard
  - Veteran Peer Support

## Social and Emotional Well-being (3)

- Two DPS programs
  - NC National Guard Family Programs
  - Veterans Specialty Court Pilot Project
- Wounded Warrior Hunting and Fishing Program (WRC)

Report pp. 13-18, Exhibit 7



# Inventory of Veterans Programs

## Workforce and Economic Development (5)

- Two programs operated by Commerce
  - Apprenticeship and Training
  - Jobs for Veterans State Grant
- NC Back-to-Work (State Board of Community Colleges)
- Troops to Teachers (Public Instruction)
- Veterans Business Outreach Center (Fayetteville State University)

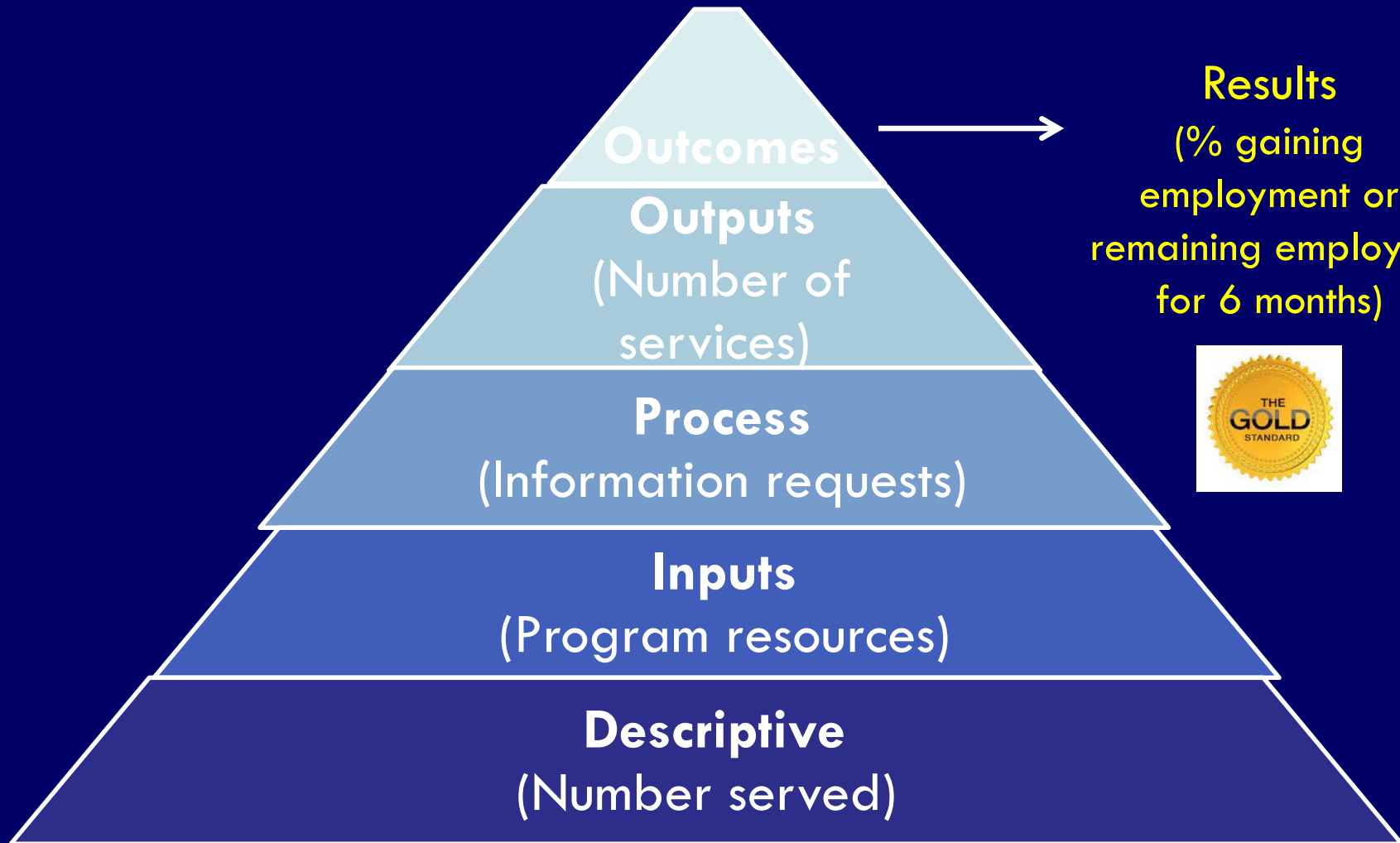


Report pp. 13-18, Exhibit 7

## **Finding 2.**

**Few programs identified for the inventory track outcomes for veterans and their families**

# Five Tiers of Evidence



Report p. 20, Exhibit 9



# Only 9 Programs Collect Outcomes

- Outcome data provide the strongest evidence of program performance
- 25% of performance measures were outcome measures
- Programs focused on physical and behavioral health and workforce and economic development were more likely to collect outcomes



Report pp. 19-21, Exhibit 10



## **Finding 3.**

**In addition to the programs identified for the inventory, North Carolina offers 22 educational initiatives, benefits, discounts, and reduced recreational fees to veterans and their families**



## **22 Other Efforts Support Veterans**

- **Education initiatives (3)**
- **Benefits allowed by state law (5)**
- **Admission discounts (9)**
- **Reduced recreational fees (5)**

Report pp. 22-26, Exhibit 11



# 22 Other Efforts Support Veterans

- **Education initiatives (3)**

- Two initiatives part of UNC SERVES

- NC Military Educational Positioning System

- UNC Partnership for National Security

- Yellow Ribbon program

- Offered by six UNC campuses and five community colleges



- All educational initiatives track the number of veterans served

Report pp. 22 & 26, Exhibit 11



# 22 Other Efforts Support Veterans

- **Benefits (5)**

- Behavioral health target population (DHHS)

- Veteran hiring preference (OSHR)

- Veteran ID cards (DOT)



- Disabled veteran property tax homestead exclusion (NC counties)

- Licensure endorsement for military training (occupational licensing boards)

- **Only 3 benefits track usage**

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# 22 Other Efforts Support Veterans

- Admission discounts (9)

- Eight state attractions: three aquariums, zoo, NC Battleship, museums of Art and History, and Tryon Palace (DCR & DENR)

- NC State Fair (DACCS)



State Fair  
October 22<sup>nd</sup>

- All but one attraction tracks the number of veterans receiving discounts

- × Museum of History

- Discounts valued at over \$200,000

Report pp. 27-28, Exhibit 12

## 22 Other Efforts Support Veterans

- **Reduced recreational fees (5)**
  - Inland Fishing
  - Coastal Recreational Fishing
  - Sportsman
  - Sportsman/Coastal Recreational Fishing
  - Basic Hunting/Inland Fishing
- All recreational licenses track the number of veterans receiving the reduced fee
- Discounts valued at over \$1.1 million



Report pp. 28-29, Exhibit 13

## **Finding 4.**

**Although the Governor recently established a Working Group on veterans, North Carolina lacks a coordinated and comprehensive strategy to support veterans in the State**

# Governor's Working Group

- Executive Order 49 created the Governor's Working Group on Veterans, Service Members and their Families in April 2014
- 8 out of 10 agencies with programs in the inventory participate in the Working Group
  - × State Treasurer
  - × Wildlife Resources Commission

Report pp. 31-32, Exhibit 14



# Governor's Working Group

- First attempt to bring together agencies serving the needs of veterans
- NC Division of Veterans Affairs is the tactical arm of the Working Group

Report pp. 31-32, Exhibit 14





# Other States Have Created Interagency Groups for Veterans

- 11 other states have formed interagency working groups for veterans since 2011
  - Executive order (8): Alabama, California, Idaho, Maine, Pennsylvania, Nevada, New York, and Tennessee
  - Legislation (3): Georgia, Rhode Island, and Texas
- Nevada legislature re-established its council in statute in 2013

Report pp. 33-34, Exhibit 15



# Other States Have Created Interagency Groups for Veterans

- Responsibilities include
  - Strategic and long-range planning
  - Identifying issues facing veterans and recommending changes in policy and state law
  - Tracking veterans programs and numbers of veterans served
  - Measuring the effectiveness and implementation of statewide efforts
  - Tracking legislative actions taken

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# Changing Landscape for Veterans Programs Needs a Strategy

- This report is the only known published summary of state programs and efforts for veterans and their families
- An inventory needs to be reviewed and updated on a regular basis

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# Changing Landscape for Veterans Programs Needs a Strategy

- Governor's Working Group has not been charged with this responsibility and does not have authority to hold agencies accountable for outcomes
- No legislative committee oversees programs and efforts that aim to improve the quality of life for veterans and their families

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# Recommendations



## **Recommendation 1.**

**The General Assembly should establish the Task Force for Veterans, Service Members and their Families in statute, direct the Task Force to develop and implement a statewide strategic plan, and direct state entities to track and report information on veterans**

# Create Task Force for Veterans, Service Members and their Families in Statute

- Membership should include
  - 10 state entities with programs identified in the inventory
  - 5 agencies offering education initiatives, benefits, discounts, and reduced recreational fees
  - Representation from local government entities, veteran services organizations and other private and not-for-profit organizations

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# Charge Task Force with Strategic Planning

- Subcommittee to develop and implement a five-year statewide strategic plan
  - Engage in a strategic planning process that includes stakeholders and conduct SWOC analysis
  - Define measureable outcomes and goals for veterans, service members, and their families
- Statewide strategic plan due no later than January 15, 2016

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# Direct Agencies to Provide Data to the Task Force

- State entities should be required to
  - track the number of veterans served and the services, benefits, and discounts
  - track funding from all sources and expenditures
  - track outcomes for veterans established by the Task Force
  - report annually

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## **Recommendation 2.**

**The General Assembly should establish the Joint Legislative Veterans and Military Service Members Oversight Committee to monitor the implementation of the statewide strategic plan for veterans, service members, and their families**

# Create Legislative Oversight Committee

- Charge Joint Legislative Veterans and Military Service Members Oversight Committee with monitoring and overseeing the statewide strategic plan for veterans and their families
- Dissolve the committee after its final report to the 2022 Session of the General Assembly

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## Summary: Findings

- North Carolina operated 23 programs for veterans but only 9 programs track outcomes for veterans and their families
- In addition, the State offers 3 educational initiatives, 5 benefits, 9 admissions discounts, and 5 reduced recreational fees to veterans
- Despite the creation of the Governor's Working Group, North Carolina lacks a coordinated and comprehensive strategy to support veterans in the State

# Summary: Recommendations

## The General Assembly should

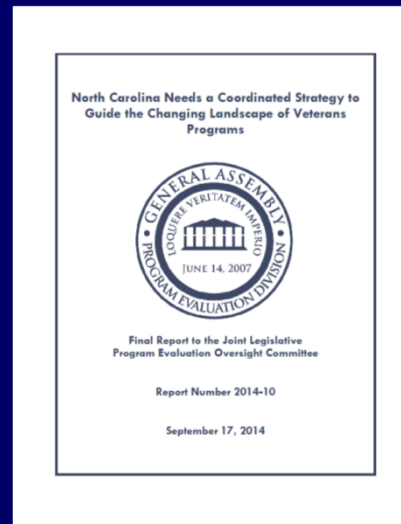
- establish the Task Force for Veterans, Service Members and their Families in statute
- direct the Task Force to develop and implement a statewide strategic plan
- direct state entities to track and report information on veterans
- establish the Joint Legislative Veteran and Military Service Members Oversight Committee to monitor implementation of the strategic plan



# Legislative Options

- Accept the report
- Refer it to any appropriate committees
- Instruct staff to draft legislation based on any of the report's recommendations

**Report available online at  
[www.ncleg.net/PED/Reports/reports.html](http://www.ncleg.net/PED/Reports/reports.html)**



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