



Legislative Council Staff

Research Note

Version: Final

Date: 12/5/2016

Bill Number

House Bill 16-1397

Sponsors

***Representatives Ryden &
Windholz
Senators Hodge & Crowder***

Short Title

***Completion Fitzsimons
Veterans Community Living***

Research Analyst

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Status

This research note reflects the final version of the bill, which was signed into law by the Governor and took effect on June 1, 2016.

Summary

This bill repeals and reenacts, with amendments, the authority of the Department of Human Services (DHS) to build a Colorado Veterans Community Living Center (CVCLC) and assorted facilities on the site of the former Fitzsimons Army Medical Center, subject to available appropriations. Under the bill, the DHS must use the vacant parcels of land to construct and operate facilities that will provide a continuum of residential care options exclusively for veterans or their qualifying family members.

This bill outlines the requirements for the construction and use of the property. The DHS must seek input from the Board of Commissioners of Veterans Community Living Centers, the State Board of Veteran Affairs, and a statewide coalition of veterans organizations in completing the project. The DHS must also provide progress updates in its annual report and quarterly updates to the State, Veterans, & Military Affairs Committees of the General Assembly.

Background

The DHS manages and operates five state CVCLCs that provide services to veterans and their spouses, widows, and in some instances, parents of deceased veterans. Services provided include long-term care, short-term rehabilitation for individuals seeking to return home following a qualifying

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hospital stay, memory care services for individuals with dementia, short-term respite care, and end-of-life/hospice services.

The five CVCLCs are located throughout the state in Aurora (Fitzsimons), Florence (McCandless), Monte Vista (Homelake), Rifle, and Walsenburg. Each facility is Medicare and Medicaid certified and licensed by the Colorado Department of Public Health and Environment. Additionally, the CVCLCs are certified by the U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs to receive federal funds in support of the care of veterans.

The original 1999 plan for Fitzsimons was for three facilities: a CVCLC, a domiciliary, and a transitional home; however, only the CVCLC has been constructed to date. The 180-bed Fitzsimons CVCLC was completed in 2002. It also includes a specialized 21-bed short-term rehabilitation unit.

House Action

House State, Veterans, & Military Affairs Committee (March 28, 2016). Representatives from the United Veterans Committee of Colorado, DHS, Department of Local Affairs, Arapahoe County, and the City of Aurora testified in support of the bill. Representatives from Close to Home and the Aurora Housing Authority also testified on the bill. The committee adopted amendment L.001, which changed the General Assembly reporting requirement from annually to quarterly. The bill was referred to the House Committee of the Whole, as amended.

House second reading (April 13, 2016). The House adopted floor amendment No. 1 to the House State, Veterans, & Military Affairs Committee report, which struck everything below the enacting clause and returned the bill to its preamended state. The House passed the bill on second reading, as amended.

House third reading (April 14, 2016). The House passed the bill on third reading with no additional amendments.

Senate Action

Senate State, Veterans, & Military Affairs Committee (April 25, 2016). The bill was referred to the Senate Committee of the Whole with a recommendation that it be placed on the consent calendar.

Senate second reading (April 27, 2016). The Senate passed the bill on second reading.

Senate third reading (April 28, 2016). The Senate passed the bill on third reading.