

SPEED ACT Compromise Summary

<https://malegislature.gov/Laws/SessionLaws/Acts/2022/Chapter154>

Open Burn Pit Registry

- Directs DPH, in consultation with DVS and National Guard, to develop educational materials and an informational pamphlet on the health impacts of open burn pits during overseas deployment and information on the VA's Airborne Hazards and Open Burn Pit Registry to be distributed to healthcare providers, service members, and veterans. And to contact all members of the Armed Forces, National Guard and veterans to register for the VA Airborne Hazards and Open Burn Pit Registry.
- And requires the Adjutant General to request that the periodic health assessment for National Guard members determine whether the member is eligible to participate in the VA's Airborne Hazards and Open Burn Pit Registry and if eligible, the member register for the Registry.

Massachusetts National Guard Family Education Program

- Establishes a Massachusetts National Guard Family Education Program to allow National Guard members to transfer their unused education benefits under the National Guard Education Assistance Program to dependents.

Slot Machines at Veterans' Organizations Commission

- Creates a commission to study slot machines at veteran organizations.

Founding Anniversaries of U.S. Army, Air Force, Coast Guard, and National Guard

- Requires the Governor to set aside the founding date anniversaries of the U.S. Army, Air Force, Coast Guard, and Massachusetts National Guard.

Medal of Fidelity

- Establishes the Massachusetts Medal of Fidelity to be presented to the next of kin of a service member or veteran who died as a result of service related post-traumatic stress disorder or a service-connected disease, condition or injury related to exposure to harmful toxin, herbicides, agents or materials.

Deborah Samson Memorial Commission

- Establishes a commission to determine a location for a memorial of Deborah Samson, Massachusetts resident who disguised herself as a man in the Continental Army during the American Revolutionary War.

Funeral and Burial Benefits

- Requires funeral directors and their staffs to provide information on burial and funeral benefits for veterans.

Property Tax exemption

- Prohibits a city or town from requesting further evidence from a disabled veteran in subsequent tax years after a veteran has already received an exemption by the assessor of that town unless the disability rating determined by the VA is reduced.

National Guard tax credit

- Establishes a tax credit for businesses that hire national guard members (similar to veterans tax credits).

Veteran Mentoring Program

- States that the president of UMASS, with the Chancellors of UMASS Amherst and Lowell and the Presidents of Bridgewater and Salem State, may establish a veteran mentoring pilot program at their institutions to assist veterans adjust to civilian life.

Senate SPEED Act (passed in October)

- *Military Spouse Licensure Portability*: Requires the Division of Occupational Licensure, the Department of Public Health, and Massachusetts Boards of Registration to accept a military spouse's application for licensure or notify them of what criteria they did not meet within 30 days of applying.
- *Expedited Military Spouse Teacher Licenses*: Establishes a military spouse certificate to be issued by the Commissioner of Education to military spouse teachers that meet certain requirements.
- *School Enrollment for Military Children*: Allows military families to register and enroll in a school district when a service member first receives their relocation order. Waives the proof of residency requirement at the time of registration. Allows military children who are transferring mid-semester to enroll in and attend one of the Commonwealth's virtual schools.
- *Purple Star Campus Designation*: Establishes the Purple Star Campus Program, administered by the Department of Education, to designate schools that demonstrate a commitment to students and families of service members.
- *In-State Tuition Continuity for Military-Connected College Students*: Ensures that a member of the military stationed in the commonwealth, their spouse, or their children are deemed an in-state resident after their acceptance at one of the state's higher education institutions.
- *Civilian Licensure and Certification Information*: Directs the Commissioner of Veterans' Services to make information on civilian licensure and certification opportunities available to service members and veterans and provide information on military education and skills to relevant agencies.