

**TITLE 1: GOVERNMENT**  
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**§ 20121. Short Title.**

This Act may be cited as the “Military Liaison and Veteran Affairs Office Act of 2002.”

**Source:** PL 13-34, § 1.

**Commission Comment:** PL 13-34, which took effect December 5, 2002, contained the following provisions:

Section 2. Purpose. The purpose of this Act is to transfer the Division of Veterans Affairs, which is currently under the Department of Community and Cultural Affairs, to the Office of the Governor and to rename it the Office of Military Liaison and Veteran Affairs.

Section 3. Findings. The Legislature finds that the Division of the Veterans Affairs currently under the Department of Community and Cultural Affairs is inconsistent with national organizational settings and as such is not conducive in serving the interest of the CNMI and the United States Armed Forces. In its current location, the Veterans Affairs office is impeded in realizing its full potential especially when sensitive military intelligence an operations and national security issues are involved. Therefore, the establishment of nationally recognized office that would cater to the needs of the United States Armed Forces in the CNMI, the returning veterans, and those individuals who gave the ultimate sacrifice for the cause of freedom is long overdue.

The Legislature further finds that the increasing global insurgencies and the barbarous act of the September 11 attacks against the United States of America present a compelling case maintain readiness and to ensure an immediate response to outside interference requiring the use of the land, sea and airspace of the Commonwealth for maneuvering and other military and security training purpose. The CNMI is capable of making available for military use its land and sea as well as its airspace as its contribution to the National’s military and national security needs. It is also position of the Legislature that the CNMI Government can contribute to the Homeland Security Act of the United States of America by availing its unique airspace, land and sea resources to the United States military for both short-term and extended periods of the time for purpose of military and periodic military and civilian civic projects.

As a member of the American political family, the CNMI Government may be required to play an increasing role in defense of the national and security interest of the United States and as such the Legislature finds that establishing an independent office of Military Liaison and Veteran Affairs under the Office of the Governor is proper and fitting, timely, and the best interest of the United States and CNMI Governments.

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Section 5. Transition.

(a) All records and property (including office equipment) of the Division of the Veterans Affairs within the Department of Community and Cultural Affairs, and all records and property used primarily in the administration of the Division of Veterans Affairs within the Department of Community and Cultural Affairs, and all personnel

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used in the administration of the Division of Veterans' Affairs within the Department of Community and Cultural Affairs (including employees whose chief duties relate to such administration) are hereby transferred to the Office of the Military Liaison and Veteran Affairs, Office of the Governor.

(b) The unexpended balance of appropriations, allocations, allotments, or other funds available for the use by the Division of Veterans' Affairs within the Department of Community and Cultural Affairs shall be transferred to the Office of Military liaison and Veteran Affairs, Office of the Governor. In the transfer of such funds, an amount shall be included for the liquidation of obligations incurred prior to the transfer.

(c) All budgeted full-time (FTE) employee positions, vehicles, office furniture, equipment and office and operation supplies currently assigned to the Division of Veterans Affairs are hereby transferred to the Office of Military Liaison and Veteran Affairs.

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Section 7. Repealer. PL 9-16, codified as 1 CMC, Division 2, Part 1, Chapter 2 Article 4, Sections 2391 through 2394, is hereby repealed in its entirety.

Section 8. Severability. If any provision of this Act or the application of any such provision to any person or circumstance should be held invalid by a court of competent jurisdiction, the remainder of this Act or the application of its provisions to persons circumstances other than those to which it is held invalid shall not be affected thereby.

Section 9. Saving Clause. This Act an any repealer contained herein shall no be construed as affecting any existing right acquired under contract or acquired under statute repealed or under any rule, regulation or order adopted under the statutes. Repealers contained in this Act shall not affect any proceeding instituted under or pursuant to prior law. This enactment of this Act shall not have the effect of terminating, or in any way modifying, any liability, civil or criminal, which shall already be in existence at the date this Act, becomes effective.