

SB-1530

Veterans Homes



Prepared by the
ELDERLY CARE
EVERYWHERE POLICY
TEAM



ELDERLY CARE EVERYWHERE

Largest youth lobbying group for senior citizens and senior care in California.

Executive Summary

Senate Bill No. 1530 (SB 1530), introduced by the Committee on Military and Veterans Affairs during the 2023-2024 Regular Session of the California Legislature, aims to amend the Military and Veterans Code relating to veterans homes. This bill seeks to replace the existing wage schedule for employed members with a stipend schedule for those who volunteer to support veterans home operations. This transition marks a significant shift in how veterans can engage and contribute within their residential communities, fostering a spirit of volunteerism and mutual support.

The bill authorizes the Department of Veterans Affairs to establish a schedule of stipends for volunteer members, subject to funding availability and the approval of the Director of Finance. The volunteer program is designed to be therapeutic, ensuring it does not interfere with the home's ability to care for its members effectively. By focusing on therapeutic engagement, the program aims to enhance the physical and mental well-being of veteran participants, providing them with meaningful activities that benefit both themselves and the broader community.

SB 1530 stipulates that volunteer work must be deemed medically appropriate and beneficial by the home's chief medical officer or their designee. This ensures that the volunteer activities contribute positively to the health and well-being of the members. This medical oversight guarantees that the activities are safe and suitable for each participant's health condition, thereby maximizing the therapeutic benefits.

The bill clearly states that volunteers will not replace civil servants or be considered employees, thereby maintaining compliance with state and federal employment laws. This provision ensures that the volunteer program supports existing staff rather than displacing them, maintaining the job security of paid employees. Additionally, stipends provided to volunteers are not subject to fee collections as per Section 1012.3 of the Military and Veterans Code, ensuring that volunteers retain the full financial benefit of their stipends.

Members participating in the volunteer program have the freedom to disenroll at any time without notice, providing flexibility and autonomy to those involved. This flexibility respects the veterans' autonomy and personal circumstances, allowing them to participate as their health and personal schedules permit.

In summary, SB 1530 enhances support in veterans homes by shifting from a wage to a stipend system for volunteers. This change promotes therapeutic engagement and maintains operational integrity. The bill demonstrates a commitment to veterans' well-being, providing meaningful participation opportunities. By fostering a volunteer culture, SB 1530 benefits the homes and enriches veterans' lives, creating a more supportive community.



ELDERLY CARE EVERYWHERE

Largest youth lobbying group for senior citizens and senior care in California.

Our Position

Senate Bill No. 1530 (SB 1530), introduced by the Committee on Military and Veterans Affairs, aims to amend the Military and Veterans Code relating to veterans homes. This bill seeks to replace the existing wage schedule for employed members with a stipend schedule for those who volunteer to support veterans home operations. This transition marks a significant shift in how veterans can engage and contribute within their residential communities, fostering a spirit of volunteerism and mutual support.

Elderly Care Everywhere strongly supports SB 1530 because it aligns with our mission to enhance the well-being and dignity of veterans. By allowing the Department of Veterans Affairs to establish a schedule of stipends for volunteer members, subject to funding availability and the approval of the Director of Finance, the bill ensures that veterans can contribute meaningfully to their communities while receiving therapeutic benefits. The volunteer program is designed to enhance the physical and mental well-being of veteran participants, providing them with meaningful activities that benefit both themselves and the broader community.

SB 1530 stipulates that volunteer work must be deemed medically appropriate and beneficial by the home's chief medical officer or their designee. This ensures that volunteer activities are safe and suitable for each participant's health condition, maximizing the therapeutic benefits. This medical oversight is crucial in maintaining the health and safety of the veterans.

The bill clearly states that volunteers will not replace civil servants or be considered employees, maintaining compliance with employment laws. This provision ensures that the volunteer program supports existing staff rather than displacing them. Additionally, stipends provided to volunteers are not subject to fee collections as per Section 1012.3 of the Military and Veterans Code, ensuring that volunteers retain the full financial benefit of their stipends.

Members participating in the volunteer program have the freedom to disenroll at any time without notice, providing flexibility and autonomy to those involved.

In summary, SB 1530 is a significant legislative measure that enhances the support structure within veterans homes by transitioning from a wage schedule to a stipend system for volunteers. This change promotes therapeutic engagement for members while ensuring the operational integrity and compliance of veterans homes. The bill reflects a commitment to the well-being and dignity of veterans, providing support and opportunities for meaningful involvement. By fostering a volunteer culture, SB 1530 enriches the lives of the veterans who choose to participate, creating a more supportive and engaged community.



ELDERLY CARE EVERYWHERE

Largest youth lobbying group for senior citizens and senior care in California.

Letter of Support for SB-1530

June 2, 2024

The Honorable Pilar Schiavo, Chair

Assembly Committee on Military and Veterans Affairs

Sacramento, CA 95814

Re: Support for SB 1530

Dear Assembly Member Schiavo and Members of the Committee,

On behalf of Elderly Care Everywhere, I am writing to express our strong support for SB 1530, which proposes significant improvements to the operations of veterans' homes in California by allowing the Department of Veterans Affairs to implement a stipend program for members who volunteer.

California's veterans' homes provide essential services and support to our aging veteran population. SB 1530 introduces a beneficial initiative to enhance these services through volunteerism. This bill encourages active participation by allowing veterans residing in these homes to receive stipends for their volunteer contributions. It ensures that these activities are therapeutic and beneficial for the residents.

Research indicates that meaningful volunteer work can significantly improve the mental health and overall well-being of seniors, including veterans. SB 1530 guarantees that volunteer activities are safe and beneficial by providing a structured program that includes medical oversight to ensure appropriateness. This initiative also helps address the staffing challenges in veterans' homes without displacing existing employees, ensuring that the homes can operate efficiently and continue to provide high-quality care.

SB 1530 will foster a more supportive and engaging environment for senior veterans, improving their quality of life and mental health. We ask you to support this critical bill, which reflects a thoughtful approach to enhancing the lives of those who have served our country.

Sincerely,
Aakrisht Mehra
Founder/CEO
Elderly Care Everywhere



ELDERLY CARE EVERYWHERE

Largest youth lobbying group for senior citizens and senior care in California.

About Elderly Care Everywhere

Elderly Care Everywhere is a transformative nonprofit organization dedicated to improving the lives of senior citizens. Since its inception, the organization has positively impacted over 40,000 seniors through a variety of programs aimed at enhancing their quality of life.

Elderly Care Everywhere has been instrumental in alleviating hundreds of thousands of dollars in medical debt, ensuring that seniors have access to the healthcare they need without the burden of financial stress. With more than 20 chapters across the United States, the organization extends its reach and resources to numerous communities, providing support and advocacy on a national scale.

Beyond U.S. borders, Elderly Care Everywhere has established flood relief camps in India, showcasing its commitment to global humanitarian efforts. The organization's impactful work has been recognized by the government of New Delhi, further highlighting its significant contributions to senior care and welfare. Through these efforts, Elderly Care Everywhere continues to lead the way in senior advocacy, ensuring that the elderly are treated with dignity and respect worldwide.

Thank you for your support of SB-1530. If you have any questions, feel free to email us at connect@elderlycareeverywhere.org