SENATE DOCKET, NO. 1162 FILED ON: 1/18/2013

SENATE . . . . . No. 1746

The Commonwealth of Massachusetts

PRESENTED BY:

Michael F. Rush

To the Honorable Senate and House of Representatives of the Commonwealth of Massachusetts in General Court assembled:

The undersigned legislators and/or citizens respectfully petition for the passage of the accompanying:

An Act relative to the Train Vets to Treat Vets Fund .

PETITION OF:

NAME:	DISTRICT/ADDRESS:
Michael F. Rush	*Norfolk and Suffolk*
Carolyn C. Dykema	*8th Middlesex*

SENATE DOCKET, NO. 1162 FILED ON: 1/18/2013

SENATE . . . . . No. 1746

By Mr. Rush, a petition (accompanied by bill, Senate, No. 1746) of Michael F. Rush and Carolyn C. Dykema for legislation relative to the Train Vets to Treat Vets Fund. Veterans and Federal Affairs.

The Commonwealth of Massachusetts

An Act relative to the Train Vets to Treat Vets Fund .

Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives in General Court assembled, and by the authority of the same, as follows:

Whereas, the Governor's Advisory Council on Veterans' Services reviews the current state and federal resources available to veterans while also working to develop new proposals to assist veterans; and

Whereas the General Court requested in 2010 a report on the effectiveness and efficiency of establishing a program of behavioral health career development for returning veterans in conjunction with the Massachusetts School of Professional Psychology under a Federal Yellow Ribbon Program of scholarship entitled, Train Vets to Treat Vets to respond to the Special Commission to Study and Investigate the Hidden Wounds of War on Massachusetts Service Members' 2009 report examining the mental health effects of war upon returning Massachusetts service members, identifying best practices in the delivery of services to veterans and addressing the barriers to accessing these services, while it described the severity and incidence of mental health issues for returning veterans;

Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives in the General Court assembled, and by the authority of the same, as follows:

SECTION 1. Chapter 10 of the General Laws, as appearing in the 2010 Official Edition, is hereby amended by inserting after section 35PP the following new section:-

Section 35QQ. There shall be established and set up on the books of the commonwealth a separate fund to be known as the Train Vets to Treat Vets Fund. The fund shall consist of monies paid to the registrar of motor vehicles pursuant to the nineteenth paragraph of section 2 of chapter 90, together with any interest or earnings accrued through investment or deposit. The state treasurer shall be custodian of the fund and shall receive, deposit and invest all monies transmitted to him under this section in accordance with sections 34, 34A and 38 of chapter 29 in such a manner as to secure the highest rate of return available consistent with the safety of the

24 fund, and shall credit interest and earnings on the trust fund corpus to the trust fund. The state
25 treasurer shall transfer funds, at the request of the council, from the income and receipts of the
26 fund to the Governor's Advisory Council on Veterans Services established by Executive Order #
27 483 in April of 2007. The council shall award and administer grants from the fund, without
28 further appropriation, to community-based programs in clinical service partnership with
29 institution(s) of higher education providing scholarship, career development and support for the
30 formal education of veterans to work with veterans and their families in the provision of
31 culturally competent behavioral health, clinical counseling and support services. The council
32 shall develop, in conjunction with the Department of Veterans Services, written criteria for the
33 awarding of those grants, which shall be evaluated and revised as necessary. For purposes of this
34 section the word "veteran" shall have the same meaning as that defined in clause Forty-third of
35 section 7 of chapter 4 of the General Laws. No funds collected from these provisions shall deter
36 from the collection of fees by the registrar of motor vehicles for the Chelsea and Holyoke
37 Soldiers' Homes pursuant to section 2 of chapter 90 of the General Laws through the purchase of
38 license plates with the designation VETERAN by eligible veterans of the commonwealth, upon
39 compensating the registry of motor vehicles for the cost associated with the license plates, and
40 which shall be deposited into and for the purposes of the retained revenue account of the
41 Soldiers' Home.

42 The council shall file a report detailing the amount of funds collected and expended from
43 the fund along with a copy of the written criteria used to expend funds to the house and senate
44 committees on ways and means not later than April 15 of each calendar year. An amount not to
45 exceed 5 per cent of the total funds deposited in the fund may be expended by the council for
46 administrative costs directly attributable to the grants and programs funded by the fund,
47 including, but not limited to the costs of clerical and support personnel. Any unexpended balance
48 of monies in the fund at the end of the fiscal year shall not revert to the General Fund but shall
49 remain available for expenditure from such fund in subsequent fiscal years. No expenditure made
50 from the fund shall cause the fund to become deficient at any point during the fiscal year.

51 SECTION 2. Section 2 of chapter 90 of the General Laws, as appearing in the 2010
52 Official Edition, is hereby amended by inserting after the eighteenth paragraph the following
53 new paragraph:-

54 The registrar shall furnish to owners of private passenger motor vehicles and motorcycle
55 veteran and military special plates issued and renewed without charge, information about the
56 purpose of the Train Vets to Treat Vets Fund upon registration or renewal presentation by the
57 applicant or surviving spouse to the registrar. The applicant or surviving spouse may elect to
58 contribute an amount to the Train Vets to Treat Vets Fund consistent with donations by non-
59 veteran or non-military special plate registrants to charitable organizations identified on these
60 special plates and if they do so elect, shall retain a distinctive Train Vets to Treat Vets Fund
61 emblem for their private passenger motor vehicle or motorcycle veteran and military special
62 plate use upon payment of the registration donation amount established by the registrar.