



Illinois State Association of Counties

POSITION STATEMENT

February 4, 2025

EXEMPT VETERANS ASSISTANCE COMMISSION FUNDING FROM PTELL

SUPPORT HB 2720

(Representative Ness)

P.A. 102-0732 (2022) made several changes to statutes affecting Veterans Assistance Commissions. These changes affected governance, administration and funding. A Veterans Assistance Commission (VAC) is a county governmental agency operated by and for U.S. Veterans. VACs are authorized to act as the central committee for veterans' assistance under the Military Veterans Assistance Act (330 ILCS 45/1) and are funded in accordance with the provisions of the Illinois Counties Code (55 ILCS 5/1-1001).

Current Law:

Current law establishes a minimum amount of annual funding for VACs equal to the lesser of .02% of the last known equalized assessed value (EAV) of the taxable property in the county OR an amount determined by the VAC to be "just and necessary." Disputes over what is "just and necessary" are evidence-based and resolved in circuit court. The 0.2% of EAV provision is found within the Public Aid Code (305 ILCS 12-21.13) and establishes a minimum levy necessary to be eligible for state funds. A county board is obligated to fund this minimum level, with the revenue derived from the property tax and/or the general corporate fund of the county.

Proposed Change:

In 2022, the state removed the authority of locally elected county boards to choose the funding level for a county agency that is not a separate county office elected by voters. The consequences of this absence of choice mean that county boards must "rubber stamp" the VAC portion of the property tax levy to meet the minimum funding requirement under state law and consequently divert county revenues used for other needs like infrastructure, public health and public safety services.

The General Assembly and Governor should amend state law to exempt the VAC portion of the property tax levy from the Property Tax Extension Limitation Law (PTELL). This would restore the ability of county boards to fund other programs and services irrespective of the minimum funding obligated for the VAC.

**RESTORE COUNTY BOARD AUTHORITY TO FUND PROGRAMS AND
SERVICES FACING REDUCTION BECAUSE OF A STATE FUNDING
MANDATE.**