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VIETNAM MEMORIAL MONUMENT FUND

House Bill 4818 (Substitute H-1) First Analysis (7-30-01)

Sponsor: Rep. Mickey Mortimer
First Committee: Veterans Affairs
Second Committee: Appropriations

THE APPARENT PROBLEM:

The Michigan Vietnam Veterans Memorial Act, among other things, created the Vietnam Veterans Memorial Monument Fund to hold funds for the construction of the Vietnam Veterans Memorial Monument until construction is completed. After the monument is completed, the fund is effectively to be dissolved with the balance of the fund to be credited to the Department of Management and Budget and used for the construction and maintenance of all veterans' monuments in the state.

THE CONTENT OF THE BILL:

The bill would amend the Michigan Vietnam Veterans Memorial Act to continue the Vietnam Veterans Memorial Monument Fund after completion of the monument, and to use money in the fund to maintain the monument and the Veterans Memorial Park. More specifically, the bill would delete the current provision regarding disposal of the balance of the Vietnam Veterans Memorial Monument Fund after completion of the construction of the monument and payment of all amounts due in connection with the monument. Instead, the bill would specify that after construction of the Vietnam Veterans Memorial Monument and of the Veterans Memorial Park, any money remaining in the fund would stay in the fund. The bill further would require the Department of Management and Budget to use the money remaining in the fund, upon appropriation by the legislature, only to maintain the Vietnam Veterans Memorial Monument and the Veterans Memorial Park.

The bill also would amend the act to specify that the fund could receive money or other assets from any other source, and would require the state treasurer to credit money received from the secretary of state for the purchase of specialty license plates honoring Congressional medal of honor recipients and for the purchase of the special veterans memorial registration plates issued under the Michigan Vehicle Code (as provided by Public Act 78 of 2000). Money

in the fund at the close of a fiscal year would remain in the fund and would not lapse to the general fund.

MCL 35.1053 and 35.1057

BACKGROUND INFORMATION:

According to the House Fiscal Agency, a total of \$1.5 million GF/GP funds has been appropriated by the state for construction of the Vietnam Monument. As of May 31, 2001, a balance of \$1.34 million state-appropriated money was in the fund, along with \$1.07 million in privately-raised funds, for a total of \$2.41 million. Construction of the monument is expected to be complete by November of this year.

For more information on the complicated history of the state Vietnam Memorial Monument, see the House Legislative Analysis Section analysis of enrolled House Bill 6091 (Public Act 470 of 2000) dated 1-10-01.

FISCAL IMPLICATIONS:

According to the House Fiscal Agency, the bill appears to have no overall net fiscal impact on state or local government. (7-9-01)

ARGUMENTS:

For:

The bill would quite rightly allow the Vietnam Memorial Monument Fund to continue after construction of the monument is completed, would allow the fund to receive money or other assets from any source, and would require that money in the fund be used for maintenance of the monument and the Veterans Memorial Park (within which the monument is to be located). The veterans' community, which includes their families and friends, has worked long and hard to accomplish their

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long-overdue goal of seeing a monument constructed that honored the sacrifices made on behalf of their country by their service in the Vietnam War. It is only right and fitting that money in the fund, nearly half of which comes from private donations, remain in the fund for the monument's maintenance once construction is completed.

POSITIONS:

The Michigan Vietnam Veterans Memorial Monument Fund Commission supports the bill. (7-30-01)

Analyst: S. Ekstrom

■This analysis was prepared by nonpartisan House staff for use by House members in their deliberations, and does not constitute an official statement of legislative intent.