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OPINION OTHER VIEWS

Expanded Definition Of Veteran Has Merit

ABERDEEN AMERICAN NEWS (Feb. 15): While imperfect, expanded definition of veteran has merit
A proposal that would broaden how South Dakota defines a veteran has been met with vitriol by some with military experience, yet received resounding support in the state House of Representatives. House Bill 1179 was approved 63-4 last week, a tally so shocking that gasps could be heard in the Capitol chamber after the vote, according to American News correspondent Bob Mercer.
Current state law defines a veteran as someone who has served "continuous federalized active military duty for a period of at least 90 days for reasons other than training."
In other words, someone who's been deployed in a war zone for at least that long.
The change in definition would remove that requirement, which would lead to extra benefits for 20,000 to 25,000 people — Reserves and National Guard — who have served in the armed forces reserves or National Guard.
The extra perks would include:
— The ability to purchase special veteran license plates.
— That their survivors could apply for \$100 burial assistance available to low-income veterans.
— Access to the State Veterans Home in Hot Springs.
— Qualification for the automatic interviews granted to veterans who apply and qualify for jobs in state government and in counties and cities that offer the preference.
Those seem like modest benefits for the men and women who are willing to defend our country, in addition to having non-military careers.

It's true that the change could lead to an instance in which a veteran who has never been called into lengthy military duty procures a spot at the veterans home instead of one who has endured multiple, extended deployments. In this day and age, though, that seems unlikely. Those joining the Reserves or National Guard nowadays have to almost expect to be deployed. Our Aberdeen-area Guard and Reserve units have seen multiple deployments since 9/11.
And Guard and Reserve units are critical supplements to our country's regular military forces.
It's hard to imagine a scenario where the draft would ever be enacted again. The nature of war has changed and so has the public's attitude toward involuntary military service. These people volunteered, and represent the numbers that might have been found using a draft in past years.
The Senate has yet to approve the veterans measure. It would also need backing from Gov. Dennis Daugaard, who has indicated he would sign the bill.

Rep. Dan Kaiser, R-Aberdeen, has been a vocal opponent of the proposal. An Aberdeen police officer and an Iraq War veteran, he feels the change would diminish the meaning of the word veteran. Kaiser is to be commended for his service and we understand his perspective, but we respectfully disagree.
While imperfect, we support the expanded definition of veteran. It seems like a small price to pay for those who are willing to defend and look out for the best interests of the nation.

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

Trickle Down Tricks

John Magnuson, Yankton
This is in response to a letter by Michael Walton (*Press & Dakotan*, Feb. 5), who doesn't recall any "trickle down" benefit for the middle class during President Obama's tenure in office (and a bunch of other stuff, too).
Mr. Walton is correct in that it is doubtful that the middle class will ever again achieve the stability and prosperity that it once enjoyed. This is probably due to globalization and changing business practices that have shifted earnings away from the middle class to the 1 percent. Government has been the well-greased enabler. That's why we could use a guy like Teddy Roosevelt in office (too bad he's dead). To Mr. Obama's credit, he has overseen the recovery from the 2008 housing crash and has decreased the

deficit inherited from George W. Bush. He has been vehemently opposed by the Republicans in almost every aspect, and has been called a poor leader by those that won't even follow their own leader, John Boehner. Can you really blame it all on Mr. Obama?
But let me ask you a question, Mr. Walton. I understand the South Dakota Legislature is working to end restrictions on county property taxes so that there can be yearly increases. This will hurt the lower and middle class. Higher income groups could probably care less about property taxes. Can't counties better manage funds and can't the state find other ways to raise money without a 1 percent income tax? What have you to say about our property taxes? And what are your buddies in Pierre up to anyway?

IN HISTORY

By The Associated Press
Today is Monday, Feb. 23, the 54th day of 2015. There are 311 days left in the year.
Today's Highlight in History: On Feb. 23rd, 1945, during World War II, U.S. Marines on two Jima captured Mount Suribachi, where they raised the American flag. (There were actually two flag-raising, the second of which was captured in the iconic photograph taken by Joe Rosenthal of The Associated Press.)
On this date: In 1836, the siege of the Alamo began in San Antonio, Texas.
In 1848, the sixth president of the United States, John Quincy Adams, died in Washington, D.C., at age 80.
In 1863, British explorers John H. Speke and James A. Grant announced they had found the source of the Nile River to be Lake Victoria.
In 1870, Mississippi was readmitted to the Union.
In 1903, President Theodore Roosevelt signed an agreement with Cuba to lease the area around Guantanamo Bay to the United States.
In 1927, President Calvin Coolidge signed a bill creating the Federal Radio Commission, forerunner of the Federal Communications Commission.
In 1934, Leopold III succeeded his late father, Albert I, as King of the Belgians.
In 1954, the first mass inoculation of schoolchildren against polio using the Salk vaccine began in Pittsburgh as some 5,000 students were vaccinated.
In 1965, film comedian Stan Laurel, 74, died in Santa Monica, California.
In 1970, Guyana became a republic within the Commonwealth of Nations.
In 1989, the Senate Armed Services Committee voted 11-9 along party lines to recommend rejection of John Tower as President George H.W. Bush's defense secretary. (Tower's nomination went down to defeat in the full Senate the following month.)
In 1995, the Dow Jones industrial average closed above the 4,000 mark for the first time, ending the day at 4,003.33.
Ten years ago: A jury was selected in Santa Maria, California, to decide Michael Jackson's fate on charges that he'd molested a teenage boy at his Neverland Ranch. (Jackson was later acquitted.) President George W. Bush and Chancellor Gerhard

Schroeder agreed to turn down the volume on their disagreements about Iraq and Iran. French film star Simone Simon, 94, died in Paris.
Five years ago: The House Energy and Commerce Committee, looking into cases of sudden, unintended acceleration of Toyota automobiles, heard tearful testimony from Rhonda Smith of Sevierville, Tennessee, who said her Lexus had raced out of control to speeds up to 100 miles an hour. Dutch skater Sven Kramer lost the Olympic gold medal to Lee Seung-hoon of South Korea when coach Gerard Kemkers sent him the wrong way on a changeover during the 10,000-meter speedskating race at Vancouver, causing Kramer to be disqualified.
One year ago: The Sochi Olympics completed a 17-day run with Canada's 3-0 victory over Sweden in the men's hockey final, the last of 98 gold medal events. Dale Earnhardt Jr. persevered through rain and wrecks to win the Daytona 500 for the second time, a decade after his first victory in the "Great American Race." Alice Herz Sommer, 110, believed to be the oldest survivor of the Holocaust, died in London. Samuel Sheinbein, 33, who'd fled from the U.S. to Israel after murdering and dismembering a Maryland man in 1997, was killed in a shootout at an Israeli prison.
Today's Birthdays: Actor Peter Fonda is 75. Pro and College Football Hall of Famer Fred Biletnikoff is 72. Author John Sandford is 71. Country-rock musician Rusty Young is 69. Actress Patricia Richardson is 64. Rock musician Brad Whitford (Aerosmith) is 63. Singer Howard Jones is 60. Rock musician Michael Wilton (Queensryche) is 53. Country singer Dusty Drake is 51. Actress Kristin Davis is 50. Tennis player Helena Sukova is 50. Actor Marc Price is 47. TV personality/businessman Daymond John (T.V. "Shark Tank") is 46. Actress Nancy Nash is 45. Rock musician Jeff Bovee (Sister Hazel) is 44. Country singer Steve Holy is 43. Rock musician Lasse Johansson (The Cardigans) is 42. Actress Kelly Macdonald is 39. Actor Josh Gad is 34. Actress Emily Blunt is 32. Actor Aziz Ansari is 32. Actress Dakota Fanning is 21.
Thought for Today: "The essential conditions of everything you do must be choice, love, passion." — Nadia Boulanger, French composer and teacher (1887-1979).

FROM THE BIBLE

For forty days the Philistine came forward and took his stand, morning and evening. 1 Samuel 17:16. Portals of Prayer, Concordia Publishing House, St. Louis.



Capitol Notebook

A Legislature Rushes Slowly To March End

BY BOB MERCER

State Capitol Bureau

PIERRE — Friday marked working day 25 of the Legislature's 2015 session. There are 13 working days left in the main run, followed by a two-week break and then a final day 39 on March 30.
The next key day is Wednesday, Feb. 25. That is working day 27 and the deadline for legislation to receive decisive action from its "house of origin" — either the House of Representatives or the Senate — where the bill began.
For those pieces of legislation that make it through the first chamber, the second key day is Tuesday, March 10. That is working day 35 and the deadline for legislation to receive action from both chambers.
Working days 36, 37 and 38 are reserved for conference committees.
The panels of three legislators from each chamber meet to attempt to work out differences on legislation that the House and the Senate passed in different versions and couldn't concur.
Working day 39 is known as veto day, because it is reserved for consideration of governor's vetoes.
Other business can be conducted on veto day, and sometimes has been. But there is risk.
The governor might veto legislation passed on that final day. The Legislature would be left without a scheduled working day to consider the veto.
The Legislature takes the two-week break before veto day so the governor has time to consider the legislation that has been passed and sent to his desk.
That has provided for some drama, depending on the year and the governor, as governors



Bob MERCER

sometimes withheld veto messages until the last possible day and sometimes until the last hours.
The strategy behind a last-hours message was to hamper legislators who would want to try to override a veto. An override takes a two-thirds majority in each of the House and the Senate.
Why does the Legislature meet for only 39 working days? The South Dakota Constitution allows a maximum of 40 days for the legislative session. Voters set the limit at 40 days in the 2008 election. The Legislature put the matter on the ballot.
The constitution previously provided for alternating annual sessions of 40 working days and 35 annual days. The annual sessions began in 1963.
Prior to 1963, the Legislature held session once every two years. Voters in 1962 approved the constitutional change to annual sessions. The pre-'63 biennial sessions ran 60 working days.
As of Friday morning, Gov. Dennis Daugaard had signed into law 26 pieces of legislation that began in the House and 16 pieces that began in the Senate.
He hadn't issued any vetoes yet and hadn't allowed any legislation to become law without his signature.
Ten other pieces of legislation that have been passed in both chambers awaited action on his desk. More is on its way.
Legislators meanwhile this session had used 19 times a rule that allows legislation to be withdrawn before its first committee hearing.
In total, 236 bills were introduced this session in the House and 193 in the Senate. Much work remains for those 13 working days left. It always does.

Michelle Malkin

Jobs For Jihad Delinquents

BY MICHELLE MALKIN

Creators.com

At the White House Summit on Extremism That Shall Remain Unspecified Because Violent Extremist Movement Might Take Extreme Offense And Act Extremely, the feds are touting a groundbreaking new strategy to fight terrorists.
Just kidding. It's actually the same old futile strategy that big-government liberals use to cure everything: mo' money, mo' money, mo' money.
Instead of killing jihadists, keeping them off of our soil, locking up their poisonous spiritual agitators and shutting off their terror-funding pipelines, President Obama called on America and the world to "invest" in unnamed immigrant "communities" vulnerable to unnamed extremism.
Some of the most generous welfare states on the planet have suffered horrific jihad attacks this year. Liberal Denmark's soft-on-jihad rehab program has been a disaster. But that hasn't stopped State Department spokes-babbar Marie Harf from mewling incessantly about "combating poverty" to combat ISIS.

Vice President Joe Biden opened the convention of jihad-coddlers on Tuesday by emphasizing the need for "respect" (cha-ching) and "a sense of community." White House senior aides spoke generically about terrorists of "all shapes and sizes," as they studiously avoided the precise nature and identity of the perpetrators of evil that precipitated the meeting.
Screw that.
Muslim jihadists chopped off the heads of 21 Egyptian Coptic Christians in Libya this weekend.
Muslim jihadists launched deadly shooting spree in Copenhagen at a cartoons-free speech event and a synagogue.
Muslim jihadists murdered Jews at a kosher deli in Paris and slaughtered the entire staff of Charlie Hebdo over their drawings.
Muslim jihadists caged and burned alive Jordanian pilot Moaz al-Kasasbeh.
Muslim jihadists threw gays off of buildings in Iraq.
Muslim jihadists beheaded journalists James Foley and Steven Sotloff, humanitarian workers Alan Henning and Peter Kassig, and Japanese nationals Haruna Yukawa and Kenji Goto Jogo.
Muslim jihadists have kidnapped and slaughtered thousands of innocent men, women and children in Nigeria.
The solution, the Obama administration wants 60 nations to D.C. to learn, is a super-sized community organizing campaign. It's Jobs for Jihad Delinquents!

No, this is not a "Saturday Night Live" anniversary skit.
Politically correct public officials from L.A., Boston and Minnesota are holding seminars on their "outreach" efforts to disaffected youths as shining counterterrorism models. In Minneapolis, where al-Shabaab recruiters have metastasized, the U.S. attorney has bought into Muslim

grievance-mongers' complaints that "immigrant youngsters remain marginalized, without access to adequate education, employment and other opportunities."

Social justice warriors are united: Less "marginalization." More midnight basketball.
What a bloody crock. States like Minnesota and Maine have bent over backward to resettle thousands upon thousands of Somali refugees — putting their demands for halal food freebies, taxpayer-funded footbaths and "cultural sensitivity" over the safety and well-being of native-born citizens and taxpayers struggling to make ends meet.
While grandmothers and disabled soldiers and breast-feeding moms must submit to invasive TSA screening, Muslim leaders in Minneapolis have the feds groveling in apology over increased scrutiny of some Somalis. I mean, it's not like dozens of young male members of their "community" are flying off to the Horn of Africa and the Middle East to take up arms for jihad after benefiting from America's blind generosity. Oh, wait. They are.
The persistent leftwing myth of the poor, oppressed jihadist is absolute madness. How many times do we have to remind the clueless kumbaya crowd that al-Qaida mastermind Ayman al-Zawahiri had a medical degree, as did Hamas bigwig Abdel al-Rantisi and the seven upper-crust doctors who helped plan the 2007 London/Glasgow bombings?

Or that al-Qaida scientist Aafia Siddiqui studied microbiology at MIT and did graduate work in neurology at Brandeis. Terror architect Khalid Sheikh Mohammed earned a mechanical engineering degree at North Carolina Agricultural and Technical State University. 9/11 lead hijacker Mohamed Atta majored in urban planning at a German technical university.
Ahmed Omar Saeed Sheikh attended the London School of Economics before abducting and murdering American journalist Daniel Pearl. And Osama bin Laden and Sayyid Qutb (Colorado State Teachers College) had plenty of exposure to wealth and Western studies.
The "root cause" of their evil-doing is not a lack of employment, education, community centers, iftar dinners at the White House or publicly funded "opportunities." When will these fools in high office learn that you can't bribe these adherents of Stone Age ideology to behave? They don't want jobs. They want blood. Revenge. Islamism dominance. Ruthless extermination of Jews, gays, Coptic Christians, Christian aid workers, cartoonists, journalists, apostates and infidels of all shapes and sizes.
The M****m j*****s are not victims of Islamophobic intolerance and Western callousness. We are the victims of our own leaders' bleeding-heart overindulgence and reckless refusal to deal with reality.

Michelle Malkin is the author of "Culture of Corruption: Obama and his Team of Tax Cheats, Crooks and Cronies" (Regnery 2010). Her e-mail address is malkinblog@gmail.com.