



Date: November 7, 2013

To: Members of the Committee on Veterans

From: Representative Petryk

Re: Assembly Bill 414

Under current Wisconsin law, former federal employees have an opportunity to purchase creditable years of service in the Wisconsin Retirement System (WRS). From May 2012 to April 2013, the Department of Employee Trust Funds (ETF) processed 26 applications out of approximately 187 people that inquired about buying into WRS. This opportunity to purchase creditable years of service with WRS also has limitations which include:

- The employee must have at least 3 creditable WRS years at the time of application;
- The employee must pay a lump sum to cover the WRS benefit they wish to purchase; and
- The employee cannot buy service for years that are also being used for other benefits. This prevents employees from “double dipping” with limited exceptions.

Currently law does however, prohibit former members of the military from purchasing WRS years based on their past service to our state and/ or country. AB 414 would remove this exclusion and allow those former members, who are state employees, the opportunity to purchase WRS benefits for their years of military service.

There is an amendment to this bill which clarifies the bill’s intentions. Assembly Amendment 1 adds language to also include the National Guard along with our Armed Forces. Also the amendment changes the language from “participating employee must have been discharged from the U.S. Armed Forces under conditions other than dishonorable.” The new language again adds the National Guard as well as the employee must be discharged under honorable or general conditions.

Since the employee has to pay a lump sum, there is no fiscal effect for the state. AB 414 has the support of ETF.

This legislation will end the unfair exclusion of some of our state’s most valuable former federal employees. I hope that I and Senator Gudex can count on your support!

Scott Walker, Governor

John A. Scocos, Secretary



**STATE OF WISCONSIN
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Chairman Petryk, Ranking Member Ringhand, and Members of the Committee,

I write in support of Assembly Bill 414 (AB 414). Just as we have in the past, we continue to support opportunities for veterans who, after serving our great nation in military service, continue their public service as employees of the State of Wisconsin.

AB 414 is a variation of what was started in 1946, the post-WWII era, which enabled veterans to earn retirement credit for their wartime service.

We have an obligation to look after the needs of veterans; AB 414 supports this obligation by providing veterans who work in service to the people of the State of Wisconsin the opportunity to apply their military service as credit toward civilian service retirement.

I respectfully request your support of AB 414. Thank you.

Sincerely,
DEPARTMENT OF VETERANS AFFAIRS

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "John A. Scocos". The signature is written in a cursive style with a horizontal line underneath.

JOHN A. SCOCOS
Secretary