

Interruptive Military Service Credit Recap

Issue

Should fully subsidized Interruptive Military Service Credit (IMSC) be expanded to include individuals who were awarded an Expeditionary medal during a period of war?

Background

Over the last three years the Select Committee on Pension Policy and the Law Enforcement Officers' and Fire Fighters' Plan 2 Retirement Board have been coordinating and studying the issue of providing fully subsidized IMSC, instead of partially subsidized IMSC, to individuals who received an Expeditionary medal in the past or will receive one during a future period of war.

Currently the state offers IMSC, both fully and partially subsidized, in accordance with Chapter 205, Laws of 2009 and the Department of Retirement Systems administration. Current policy restricts fully subsidized service credit to members serving in the highest risk combat operations according to the Department of Defense (DoD). Others may serve in similarly situated deployments or may have served in other capacities and qualify to request partially subsidized IMSC.

Campaign, Expeditionary, and Service medals recognize service members for participation in military campaigns, expeditions, significant military operations, and for otherwise meritorious military service. Eligibility and criteria are based on various factors, such as degree of risk or proximity to combat, as determined and outlined by the DoD.

Highlights

- ❖ Members who served in combat and received an Expeditionary medal may feel it is unfair they do not qualify for fully subsidized IMSC while others in combat operations do. These members may support benefit expansion.
- ❖ On the other hand, some Expeditionary medals may be awarded to members who are deployed in support of combat operations but are not in the geographic area where the actual combat is occurring, so some policymakers giving weight to this criterion may not support expansion.
- ❖ If the policy goal is to provide fully subsidized service credit to as many employees who are in combat or in support of combat operations as possible, then policymakers may support expansion.
- ❖ Policymakers who feel members participating in only the highest risk and large-scale operations ought to qualify for fully subsidized service credit, or who want to avoid increases to pension costs, may not support expansion.

- ❖ Policymakers who feel consistency in benefits is a priority may be inclined to support expansion to include eligibility for retirees in some form.

Committee Activity

The Committee received a briefing at the June 2022 meeting where they voted to recommend the bill draft.

Recommendation to the 2023 Legislature

Sponsor a bill draft to expand benefits by providing fully subsidized IMSC to individuals who received an Expeditionary medal during any armed conflict.

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