

August 23, 2011

To the Honorable Members of the
Illinois Senate,
97th General Assembly:

I hereby return Senate Bill 90 with specific recommendations for change.

My specific recommendation is to give voters the right, through binding referendum, to establish a Veterans' Advocate as an official of local government to coordinate veteran services, act as a liaison between units of government and veterans, and promote measures by which local governments and agencies may assist the veteran population in the areas of job creation, education, housing, health care, and other issues as the Veterans' Advocate deems appropriate. The underlying legislation makes changes to the duties and responsibilities of the Secretary of State with respect to the conduct of elections and voter registration. Those changes, however, were already enacted into law as part of SB 1586 (P.A. 97-0081).

Therefore, pursuant to Article IV, Section 9(e) of the Illinois Constitution of 1970, I hereby return Senate Bill 90, entitled "AN ACT concerning transportation.", with the following specific recommendations for change:

on page 1, line 5, after "6-50.2", by inserting "and by adding Article 28A"; and

on page 22, below line 4, by inserting the following:

"(10 ILCS 5/Art. 28A heading new)

ARTICLE 28A. REFERENDUM FOR VETERANS' ADVOCATE

(10 ILCS 5/28A-1 new)

Sec. 28A-1. Local government initiative petition and referendum for establishing a Veterans' Advocate.

(a) In order to realize the public policy goal of honoring veterans, the electors of any unit of local government may pass, by initiative petition and referendum in the manner prescribed by this Article, a binding ordinance establishing the Office of Veterans' Advocate as an official of the local government.

(a-1) For the purposes of this Section, "Veterans' Advocate" means an official of a unit of local government who coordinates veteran services, acts as a liaison between units of government and veterans, and promotes measures by which local governments and agencies can assist veterans.

(a-5) A Veterans' Advocate established under this Section shall be appointed by the chief executive of the unit of local government, subject to the advice and consent of a majority

of the elected officials of the governing body of the unit of local government. Compensation shall be determined by local ordinance.

(b) A binding ordinance relating to establishment of a Veterans' Advocate may be proposed by a petition signed by the number of electors equal to at least 1% of the total votes cast for Governor at the last general election in the unit of local government. The petition shall contain the text of the question and the date of the election at which the proposed question is to be submitted, shall have been signed by petitioning electors not more than 12 months preceding the election, and shall be filed with the clerk of the unit of local government at least 92 days before that regular election. The form of the question shall be as follows:

“Shall (insert the name of the unit of government) establish a Veterans' Advocate to assist veterans the areas of job creation, education, housing, and health care?”.

(c) Except as otherwise provided in this Article, petitions filed under this Article shall be governed by Article 28 of this Code.

(d) If a majority of those voting on the proposed ordinance indicate approval of its adoption, it shall be passed and become effective.”.

With these changes, Senate Bill 90 will have my approval. I respectfully request your concurrence.

Sincerely,

Pat Quinn
Governor