

VETERANS AFFAIRS SUBCOMMITTEE REPORT
June 2013



Charge: To gain a better understanding of services provided to Veterans in Kent County, and identify gaps that inhibit the ability to fund said services, identify potential funding sources, and report findings to the appropriate Standing Committee for formal recommendation to the Board of Commissioners.

The mission of Kent County government is to be an effective and efficient steward in delivering services for our diverse community. Our priority is to provide mandated services, which may be enhanced and supplemented by additional services to improve the quality of life for all our citizens within the constraints of sound fiscal policy.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The Kent County Board of Commissioners reorganized the Soldiers and Sailors Relief Commission into the Kent County Department of Veterans Affairs (KCDVA) in 2009 to create a “one stop shop” for County veterans. Inherent in this reorganization was an expansion of the services provided by the county to local veterans. At the time, no one could have foreseen the tremendous unmet needs of Kent County veterans.

Chair Sandi Parish appointed a Subcommittee of five commissioners to gain a better understanding of services provided to veterans in Kent County, identify gaps that inhibit the ability to fund said services and identify potential funding sources. Through thorough research and analysis, the Subcommittee has found compelling facts that point to a need for additional funding for veteran services in Kent County.

One of the foremost concerns among service providers, leadership in Michigan as well as veterans service organizations is the fact that Michigan has continually been ranked 53 out of 53 states/territories nationally for the last 11 years in terms of federal dollars awarded to its veterans, despite having the 11th largest veteran population in the country. In 2010, Michigan had the highest unemployment rate for Post 9/11 veterans at 29.4%. There is consensus that more outreach to veterans in Michigan is a priority.

| | Unemployment Rate (Blended 2006-2010) | B.A Degree | Homeless Veterans (2010) |
|------------------|---|-------------------|------------------------------------|
| Kent County | 10.6% | 24% | 575 |
| Oakland County | 9.7% | 32% | 451 |
| Washtenaw County | 9.6% | 38% | 439 |

The socio-economic state of veterans in Kent County is also a cause for concern. The Community Research Institute at Grand Valley State University recently conducted research on this issue and has published a Veteran’s Economic Climate Report. It found that the state of Kent County veterans is often worse than peer counties in Michigan.

| | # of Veterans (2011 GDX) | Veterans Service Officers Employed | Ratio of VSOs to Veterans |
|------------------------------------|---|---|--|
| Kent County | 34,938 | 2.5 | 1:13,975 |
| Grand Traverse/ Leelanau County | 10,012 | 3 | 1:3,337 |
| Livingston County | 12,534 | 3.5 | 1:3,581 |
| Oakland County | 68,956 | 11 | 1:6,268 |
| Washtenaw County | 16,991 | 5 | 1:3,398 |

Moreover, a stark contrast can be made when comparing the above statistics and access to services to veterans in each of these counties. Kent County provides one Veterans Services Officer (VSO) per every 13,975 veterans in the County, while its next closest peer – Oakland – provides twice as much support (1:6,268).

Likewise, Kent County spends \$8 per veteran, while its next closest peer, again Oakland County, spends over three times as much per veteran (\$27) and Livingston County spends almost eight times as much (\$55).

The work conducted by the KCDVA significantly impacts the lives of veterans and the community. To that point, in the past three years, the KCDVA has secured \$6.45 million dollars in federal benefits,

| | # of Veterans (2011 GDX) | DVA Budget (2013) | Dollar per Vet |
|---------------------------------|--------------------------|-------------------|----------------|
| Kent County | 34,938 | \$294,064 | \$8 |
| Grand Traverse/ Leelanau County | 10,012 | \$454,572 | \$45 |
| Livingston County | 12,534 | \$690,933 | \$55 |
| Oakland County | 68,956 | \$1,873,141 | \$27 |
| Washtenaw County | 16,991 | \$706,804 | \$42 |

assisted 469 veteran families with emergency relief. It has also provided reliable veteran related information to Kent County residents, thus addressing the complaints from local veterans heard by the Board of Commissioners in 2008.

In conclusion the Subcommittee recommends the following:

1) Increase general fund (GF) spending for FY2014

The Subcommittee recommends that the Kent County Board of Commissioners strongly consider increasing the County General Fund appropriation in FY2014 above the \$296,044 allocated in FY2013. At a minimum, an additional \$50,000 for FY2014 will increase VSOs by .5 FTE, for a total of 3.0 FTE VSOs (2 FT/2 PT), and increase funding for direct services to \$155,000, which is \$26,000 more than the FY2013 budget.

As stated above, the work that the KCDVA does on behalf of veterans impacts the broader community. In the Department’s brief history, for every VSO FTE returns approximately \$974,000 to the community annually, yielding an overall 2,310% return on investment. Moreover, the additional outreach performed by the KCDVA since the 2008 reorganization continues to generate additional requests for services. As more veterans return from the wars in Iraq and Afghanistan, these requests are only anticipated to increase. This Subcommittee recommends that the Board of Commissioners consider that the need for help is growing within the veteran community and that county services are often the last resort for help within the community for indigent veterans. A minimum of \$50,000 for FY2014 will help serve those needs, both in emergency services as well as assistance to veterans in completing claims.

2) The County should consider placement of a Veterans Service Millage before the voters in 2014

While the Subcommittee recognizes that the Board of Commissioners has the authority to levy up to 1/10 of a mil without a vote of the people under PA 214 of 1899, the idea of increasing Kent County property taxes without a vote of its residents is not consistent with the Board of Commissioners’ standards for transparency and openness.

To that point, the Subcommittee recommends that the County considers placement of a Veterans Service Millage before the voters in 2014. It is expected that a millage rate of between .025 mill (2.5 hundredth of a mill) and .050 mill (5 hundredth of a mill) would generate between \$500,000 and \$1,000,000 based on 2013 taxable values. For an individual property owner with a true cash value of \$200,000, a .050 mill would equate to a \$5.00 increase in taxes. For an individual property owner with a true cash value of \$100,000, a .050 mill would equate to a \$2.50 increase in taxes. The additional funding would be utilized to increase the number of County VSOs to accommodate for the increased requests for assistance, both in terms of emergency relief and assistance with claims. This will help to reduce the disparity in federal funding received by Kent County veterans. Further, it would help the Department increase its outreach to veterans and allow a portion of General Fund dollars to be utilized for other purposes.

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ATTACHMENTS

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- B.** Kent County DVA’s Policy for Emergency Relief
- C.** Veterans Administration GDX 2011 Report
- D.** Local Financial Resources/Multiple Counties
- E.** County Budget Comparison
- F.** ‘Gov. Rick Snyder: Michigan Veterans’ Unemployment Rate “Simply Unacceptable”
Melissa Anders. *Mlive.com*. May 30, 2012.
- G.** ‘Are States, Cities Ready for a Wave of Veterans? Human Services Officials Have a lot
of Work to do to Prepare for the Return of War Vets from Iraq and Afghanistan,’
Jonathan Walters. *Governing Magazine*. June 12, 2012.
- H.** Public Act 214 of 1899
- I.** Michigan Dashboard – Veteran Unemployment Rate
- J.** ‘Kent County Veterans’ Affairs Economic Climate Report.’ Grand Valley State
University, Johnson Center Community Research Institute. September 2012.
- K.** Kent County 2012 Millage Calculator. Rates of .025 and .050

I. Background and Investigation

In December of 2011, Board Chair Sandi Parrish assigned Commissioners Shroll, Mast, Chivis, Vonk and Antor to the Veterans Affairs Subcommittee. The charge of the Subcommittee was as follows:

To gain a better understanding of services provided to Veterans in Kent County, and identify gaps that inhibit the ability to fund said services; identify potential funding sources; and report findings to the appropriate Standing Committee for formal recommendation to the Board of Commissioners.

Staff assigned to assist with this report included Wayman Britt, Assistant County Administrator, Carrie Roy, Veterans Affairs Office Manager, and Matthew VanZetten, Management Analyst.

The Subcommittee met bi-monthly from January to July, 2012. During this time, the Subcommittee conducted several activities, including the following:

- Review of the 2008 Kent County Report and Recommendation of Provision of Services to Veterans
- Interviews with key personnel from the counties of Oakland, Washtenaw and Livingston Veterans' Affairs Departments, Michigan State Department of Veterans Affairs and local service officers
- Identification of potential funding sources
- Review of current services provided to veterans
- Review of data related to expenditures, financial resources, and veterans' demographics

II. Key Findings

A summary of the key finding during the six month investigation revealed the following:

A. Report Reviews

In 2007 the Board of Commissioners received several complaints from local veterans and veterans groups regarding the services provided by the Kent County Soldier's and Sailor's Relief Commission. This prompted a Board of Commissioners Subcommittee¹ to be appointed with the intent to review County services being provided. A subsequent report and recommendation was provided to the County Board of Commissioners in 2008 that revealed the following:

- There is no single information source for Veterans services in Kent County.

¹ Members of the Subcommittee were as follows: Commissioners Vonk (Chair), Mayhue, Tanis & Voorhees

- The Board of Commissioners, while required to fund certain veterans' services, had no real control over their delivery under the current structure.
- There was a need for better communication between the County and the other Veterans' services providers in the County.
- Strengthen cooperation and collaboration with other Veterans' services providers in the County could enhance the provision of services to veterans.

This resulted in the reorganization of the Soldiers Relief Commission into a County Department of Veterans Affairs, authorized under PA 192 of 1953. Inherent in the reorganization of the Department under this Public Act was an expansion beyond the previous services provided, with the following goals and objectives:

- Increased Customer Satisfaction
- Appropriate Disbursement of Funds for the Services Provided (i.e. in accordance with policy)
- Improved & Increased Communication with other Veterans' Service Organizations
- Track Dollars Leveraged for County Veterans as a Result of Department Efforts
- Track Various Performance Measures (i.e. #of Veterans requests received/ # of Veterans provided services; # & type of services provided – burials, markers, food vouchers, rent vouchers, # of Veteran's Request Handled per Staff Hour Worked; etc.)
- Decrease in Amount of Time from Service Request to Fulfillment/Disposition

The 2008 report indicated that with better outreach to veterans it may require the County to increase funding to cover the demand for Soldiers' Relief services. In fact, the department's 2009 budget increased from \$187,237 to \$202,080 to support the growing need. Funding for administration, however, was not included even though time and effort to process requests and to conduct outreach had increased. As a result of the housing market crash in 2007, General Funding revenues declined and funding cuts were made across the County. In 2010, the department's budget was reduced to \$176,285 and in 2011a further reduction to \$169,509 was implemented. With implementation of the plan set forth in the 2008 report, the number of veterans seeking and receiving services increased, resulting in an increased need for staffing, although it was not originally projected. Veterans Affairs Committee members volunteered their time to assist the department and a partnership was developed with the federal VA's Vocational Rehabilitation and Employment Program for the provision of non-paid work study interns. This partnership allowed the Department to accomplish the goals and objectives established in 2008.

The Subcommittee also reviewed the Veterans' Affairs Department's recent significant accomplishments, including but not limited to, the following:

Significant Accomplishments in 2010

- Department Manager obtained accreditation as a Veterans Service Officer
- Established a cooperative committee of local veterans' service agencies
- Increased staff at no cost to county through a partnership with VA
- Secured \$635,812 in federal VA benefits for Kent County veterans

Significant Accomplishments in 2011

- Interns received accreditation training at no cost to county
- Department recognized as authorized agent for Michigan Veterans Trust Fund which netted \$8,000 additional administrative revenue
- Assisted local organizing committee in securing the NACVSO National Conference (2014)
- Secured \$2,337,446 in federal Veterans Administration (VA) benefits for Kent County Veterans

Significant Accomplishments in 2012

- Three VA work study interns hired as part time staff
- Continued partnership with VA, and maintained three new work study student slots
- Secured \$2,621,760 in federal VA benefits for local veterans (January –Oct)

Below are examples of results achieved through the intervention and assistance by Veterans' Affairs Department staff:

- A claim for Death Indemnity Compensation (DIC) was filed for the surviving spouse of a Vietnam veteran who died from Agent Orange related diseases in 2011. The Department received notification of the award in June of 2012. The spouse was awarded a lump sum payment of \$150,288 in accrued benefits owed to her husband from a previous denial from the VA. In addition, the VA awarded monthly DIC payments of \$1,196.
- A claim for service connected compensation for a Gulf War Veteran was filed in January 2012. The veteran is a father of four children and been unable to work due to his disabilities for over two years. In 2010, he worked with a different service officer to submit a claim, and it was denied due to improper filing. In our filing, the KCDVA requested the VA to honor his original claim date in 2010. In May 2012, the Department received notification of an award for compensation of \$2,040 per month and a retroactive payment of \$33,921.

- In July 2012, a veteran of the Iraq war requested emergency rental assistance. She is a single mom of two children who works and attends school using her Post 9/11 G.I. Bill benefit. She had been to Department of Human Services and several other agencies for assistance, but because she receives a VA educational stipend of \$1,025 per month she was denied assistance due to income guidelines. The Department was able to assist her and prevent her from being evicted.

B. Stakeholder Interviews

Interviews with stakeholders had a common theme; outreach is lacking throughout the State and locally. Michigan is performing worse than all other states.

Michigan's Ranking in Federal Benefits Received for Veterans

The State of Michigan performs dramatically worse than all other States in terms of federal dollars secured for veterans despite being the 11th largest state in terms of veteran population.² In an effort to address this decade long problem, the State is currently undergoing an initiative to enhance outreach as well as track veteran data through a web-based program called Vetraspec. Counties willing to enter into a contract with the State will receive \$10,000 dollars for each accredited service officer from the State's FY2013 budget as well as reimbursement for the first year of user fees for Vetraspec.

Discussions also pointed to a backlog in applications at the federal VA Detroit Regional Office and that the delay in processing veterans' claims is part of the reason for the State's ranking. Although no one reason can explain the low performance, there is agreement that this issue should be of concern to the State, counties and those agencies that serve veterans.

Inadequate Outreach to Veterans

A second primary issue that surfaced during interviews was the inadequate means of outreach to veterans. With limited staff and resources, it is difficult for agencies that assist veterans to get out of the office and conduct outreach. Interviews revealed that confusion about veterans benefits still exist and veterans remain unsure/unaware of potential benefits they may be eligible to receive.

There is also concern regarding the future impact of returning Iraq and Afghanistan veterans and the impact on current resources available. The prevalence of Traumatic Brain Injuries (TBI's) and Post Traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD) among these veterans has created issues with reintegration into civilian life. Family, work and school stress is compounded for veterans who suffer from either one of these injuries, which often results in financial hardship.

Interviews also revealed that despite geographic location, veterans from certain war eras seem to have similar issues. Also noteworthy was the high unemployment rates among veterans in the State of Michigan compared to the non-veteran population.

² VA GDX 2011 Report

Individuals interviewed by Subcommittee included the following individuals.

- Carl Pardon, Director, Livingston County Veterans Affairs
- Michael Smith, Director, Washtenaw County Veterans Affairs
- Garth Wooten, Division Manager Oakland County Veteran Services
- Robert Price, Veterans Service Administrator, Michigan Department of Military and Veterans Affairs
- Steve Pruitt, Service Officer, Disabled American Veterans
- William Fogerty, Service Officer, Disabled American Veterans
- Josh Lunger, Iraq Veteran, Chamber of Commerce
- Fred Chambers, Kent County Veteran Affairs Committee Member
- Paul Potter, Kent County Veteran Affairs Committee Chair
- Mike Buri, Kent County United Veterans Counsel Commander
- Dick McDonald, Director, Health Care for Homeless Vets
- Simeon Switzer, Iraq/Afghanistan Veteran, student GVSU Summary of interviews in attachment A.

C. Potential Funding Sources

A thorough search of available funding revealed that options are limited. The Subcommittee identified and reviewed the following funding sources and considered options related to them:

Federal Resources

The current benefits intake and submittal work done through KCDVA assists veterans in receiving federal compensation and pension benefits. A review of potential federal grant opportunities revealed that the department is pursuing all federal service grants available and that some grants are not eligible for submittal by KCDVA.

State Resources

The Snyder Administration is taking proactive steps toward increasing the federal benefits awarded to Michigan's veterans. One step being taken is the expansion of a database tool (Vetraspec) used in some counties to track benefits and claims. As part of this, the State intends to provide funding opportunities to counties through a competitive grant process. Kent County already uses Vetraspec and it may be eligible for reimbursement of license and users fees from the State for as long as funds are available. This would be equivalent to approximately \$1,200 per year.

The State has also appropriated \$200,000 in its FY 2013 budget for a one time grant opportunity for all 83 counties. Counties could apply for up to \$20,000 to increase hours for accredited veteran service officers. KCDVA has secured a \$20,000 grant through this process to increase staff by 15 hours per week or add 780 staff hours for one year.

In addition to the grant dollars, Michigan has recently formed a new agency, the Michigan Veterans Affairs Agency, which will add five new service officers within the State to assist veterans in applying for benefits. These service officers will be located in Lansing, Detroit (2 positions), Grand Rapids and Iron Mountain.

The Michigan Department of Military and Veterans Affairs has partnered with the Secretary of State in outreach efforts, which will include adding the option for veterans to have a veteran's designation on their drivers license; offering a veterans license plate for purchase to support veterans; and, the distribution of veterans benefits information at the 131 Secretary of State offices throughout Michigan.

Current and Potential Local Resources

Relief Millage

In 1899, the Michigan Legislature enacted the Veterans' Relief Fund (Public Act 214; MCLA 35.21 et seq) which provides, in part, that "each county shall annually levy, a tax not exceeding 1/10 mill (.10 mill), to be levied and collected as provided by law for the purpose of creating a fund for the relief of honorable discharged indigent members of the army, navy, air force, marine corps, coast guard and women's auxiliaries of all wars or military expeditions and the indigent spouses, minor children and parents of each such indigent or deceased member."

The Veterans' Relief Fund was enacted in 1899, 79 years before the Headlee Amendment. As a result, the Board of Commissioners has the authority to approve a levy for indigent veteran claims. If levied, these funds would be restricted to provide direct services to indigent war era veterans and their legal dependents and could not be used for general operating expenses.

Operating Millage

An operating millage can be used to support direct benefits to indigent veterans as well as increased outreach services to all veterans, which would enhance the amount of federal benefits received locally. This funding is contingent on voter approval, and if approved, would become a variable budget amount based on current taxable values. The millage amount then could not be changed without another vote of the citizens. The next scheduled countywide ballots are in August and November of 2014.

County General Fund

The department is primarily funded through the County General Fund. This amounted to \$262,133 in FY 2012. The FY 2013 recommended budget is \$294,064, equaling an increase of approximately \$32,000. The department also receives \$8,000 from the State for the

Administration of the Veterans' Trust Fund. Increasing County General Funds requires annual review and approval by the Board of Commissioners.

D. Services Provided to Veterans:

Kent County has the fourth largest veteran population in the State of Michigan with approximately 36,000 veterans³. It is important to note that the number reflected in the VA Annual GDX report is reflective of veterans who receive some type of VA benefit. A more comprehensive estimate of the actual veteran population is closer to 50,000 veterans.

According to the VA, it is expected that the number of veterans in Kent County will shrink as World War II and Korean Era veterans pass away. However, in comparison to other peer counties in Michigan (Oakland and Washtenaw), the decrease will be less pronounced.

Local services can be broken down into five categories.

Federally Funded Services

- Community Based Outpatient Clinic
- Vet's Center
- Health Care for Homeless Veterans Center
- Vocational and Rehabilitation Office
- HUD-VASH vouchers

State Funded Services

- Grand Rapids Home for Veterans
- Michigan Veterans' Trust Fund (administered through the County)
- Veterans Employment Representatives
- Coalition of Service Organizations Provide 4 Service Officers (57 hour per week)
 - Disabled American Veterans: 32 hours per week
 - American Legion: 13 hours per week
 - Veterans of Foreign War: 6 hours per week
 - Marine Corps League: 6 hours per week

County Funded Services

Department of Veterans Affairs (2.5 Full Time Positions)

- Soldiers Relief
- Michigan Veterans Trust Fund

³ VA Annual GDX Report

- Service Officers
- Referrals and General Information

Non-Profit

- Goodwill's Veteran Employment and Housing Services (Federal & State)
- Mary Free Bed Wounded Warrior TBI Program (Federal Grant Funded)
- West Michigan Veterans Assistance Program (Privately Funded)

Non Veteran Specific Financial Resources

- Department of Human Services
- Senior Neighbors
- ACSET
- North Kent Services
- Urban League
- Salvation Army
- American Red Cross
- Church Benevolence Funds

Regardless of the seemingly comprehensive array of services specific to veterans, Kent County is ranked 71st of the 83 counties in Michigan (total VA expenditures). Even more abysmal is the State of Michigan's ranking of 53 nationally – behind Guam, Puerto Rico and the District of Columbia even though Michigan has the 11th highest veteran population in the nation.⁴

E. Socio-Economic Data

Socio-economic data was also collected regarding various veteran related issues. Below is a summary:

Unemployment among Veterans

Unemployment rates among veterans are higher than their civilian counterparts. According to latest statistics, unemployment among Michigan's veterans was 11.2%, 3% higher than the overall population.⁵ Although this is an improvement from 2010 when the unemployment rate among veterans was 15.9% statewide, nearly 10% higher than the overall population, it still points to an overwhelming problem for veterans.⁶

In comparison to peer counties within the State, the unemployment rate for Kent County veterans was 10.6% (blended 2006 – 10 average) while Oakland County's veteran unemployment rate was 9.7% and Washtenaw's was 9.6%. The State rate for veterans was 11.0%⁷

Moreover, the educational attainment of Kent County veterans also lags Oakland and Washtenaw counties. The number of Kent County veterans with a BA degree is 24%, while in Oakland and Washtenaw it is 32% and 38% respectively.⁸

⁴ VA's 2011 GDX Report.

⁵ Mi Dashboard- Veteran Unemployment Rate

⁶ Mi Dashboard- Veteran Unemployment Rate

⁷ Kent County Veterans' Affairs Economic Climate Report; GVSU Johnson Center, Community Research Institute; September 2012.

⁸ Kent County Veterans' Affairs Economic Climate Report; GVSU Johnson Center, Community Research Institute, September 2012.

Even more concerning are the extremely high unemployment rates for post 9/11 veterans. In 2010, the unemployment rate for post 9/11 veterans in Michigan was at 29.4%, the highest in the nation. In 2011, the unemployment rate improved to 14.4 %; however, this is still significantly higher than their civilian counter parts.⁹

The alarming unemployment rate among veterans has caused the State and the federal government to take action recently. For example, House Bills 5582, 5583 and 5590, were recently introduced in the State House of Representatives and would assist Michigan veterans through entering the work force and put their military experience to use in everyday civilian life. Additionally, the federal government held a Tri-State job fair in Detroit that attempted to match potential employers with veterans. Over 5,000 veterans attended this event.

Although steps are being taken to improve the unemployment rates among veterans, the need for financial assistance is still present, especially for post 9/11 veterans.

Geographical Distribution of Expenditures

The VA tracks federal dollars expended in each state and county on an annual basis. A report is provided at the end of each Fiscal Year and available on the VA's website. This report is used by veteran service providers to determine needed outreach based on a comparison of veteran population and federal dollars being expended in states and counties. Michigan has ranked last for the past 11 years according to VA's GDX report. Kent County currently ranks 71st of the 83 counties, despite having the fourth largest veteran population.¹⁰

State Veterans Benefits

Statewide, the Michigan Veterans Trust Fund has seen an increase in requests for assistance, with a 20% increase for assistance during 2012. In Kent County, applications for assistance increased 37% in 2012. This can be attributed to greater visibility of the Trust Fund since the program has now re-located services to 82 Ionia NW and the fact that the program is now administered by the Kent County Veterans' Affairs Department.

Demographic Breakdown of Veterans by War Era

Statistics from the Michigan Department and Military Affairs 2011 Report demonstrate that:

- Michigan has the 11th largest veteran population in the country.
- 7.1% of Michigan's population are veterans.
- Veterans ages 50-70 comprise over half of the total veteran population in Michigan.
- The largest proportion of Michigan veterans are comprised of Vietnam veterans.

⁹ Governor Snyder Unemployment Rates for Veterans Unacceptable article.

¹⁰ VA 2011 GDX Report

- Approximately 68% of Michigan’s veteran population is located in 17 counties.
- 5 % of Michigan’s veterans reside in Kent County.

A comparison of Kent, Washtenaw, Livingston and Oakland county veteran client populations served is below. A complete summary is found in Attachment A.

Veteran Client Populations Served by Comparison Counties

| | Livingston | Oakland | Washtenaw | Kent |
|------------------|-------------------|----------------|------------------|-------------|
| WWII | 23% | 31% | 35% | 42% |
| Korean | 10% | 10% | 11% | 13% |
| Vietnam | 43% | 40% | 30% | 31% |
| Gulf War | 8% | 6% | 2% | 8% |
| OEF/OIF | 9% | 7% | 3% | 1% |
| Peacetime | 7% | 6% | 19% | 5% |

Current and Historical Expenditures for the KCDVA

The chart below highlights the historical and current expenditures for the KCDVA. It is important to note that a return on investment was realized shortly after the reorganization of the office. The current return on the investment of general fund dollars provided for staffing the

| Year | Direct Services Total | Admin Total | Total Budget | ROI Federal Benefits Secured through KCDVA | Retro-Pay/Lump Sum Recoveries | ROI % |
|-------------|------------------------------|--------------------|---------------------|---|--------------------------------------|--------------|
| 2000 | \$126,051 | \$28,572 | \$154,623 | \$0 | \$0 | |
| 2001 | \$120,142 | \$45,983 | \$166,125 | \$0 | \$0 | |
| 2002 | \$103,613 | \$58,462 | \$162,076 | \$0 | \$0 | |
| 2003 | \$112,685 | \$58,801 | \$171,486 | \$0 | \$0 | |
| 2004 | \$122,886 | \$60,945 | \$183,831 | \$0 | \$0 | |
| 2005 | \$120,000 | \$65,093 | \$185,093 | \$0 | \$0 | |
| 2006 | \$119,934 | \$66,843 | \$186,777 | \$0 | \$0 | |
| 2007 | \$94,905 | \$71,532 | \$166,437 | \$0 | \$0 | |
| 2008 | \$115,930 | \$73,000 | \$188,930 | \$0 | \$0 | |
| 2009 | \$144,493 | \$49,131 | \$193,624 | \$0 | \$0 | |
| 2010 | \$102,347 | \$73,575 | \$175,922 | \$266,112 | \$517,234 | 965% |
| 2011 | \$93,286 | \$78,365 | \$171,651 | \$1,610,400 | \$1,011,360 | 3,245% |
| 2012* | \$127,431 | \$144,245 | \$271,676 | \$2,958,504 | \$848,902 | 2,540% |

KCDVA office results in millions of federal dollars for Kent County veterans and their families every year.

Since the KCDVA reorganized, its Return on Investment for federal benefits has been 2,310% (2010 – 2012).

ROI = [Return (Federal Benefits) – Investment (Administrative Expense)]

When benchmarking and reviewing expenditures per veteran, the Department's funding fares quite low in comparison to peer counties. Kent County expects to provide \$8 per veteran in 2013 while Oakland County will provide \$27 per veteran.

| | # of Veterans (2011 GDX) | DVA Budget (2013) | Dollar per Vet |
|------------------------------------|-------------------------------------|------------------------------|---------------------------|
| Kent County | 34,938 | \$294,064 | \$8 |
| Grand Traverse/ Leelanau County | 10,012 | \$454,572 | \$45 |
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III. Gaps in Service

Based on extensive testimony and research, this committee has determined the following six areas where gaps remain in providing services to Kent County veterans.

A. Shortage of Funding

Prior to the reorganization of the KCDVA funding was less of an issue since the Soldiers' Relief Commission operated only the SSR and Burial Funds. Since reorganizing in 2009, outreach and coordination with other community agencies as well as the federal VA has greatly increased the visibility of the KCDVA in the community. This has resulted in increased requests for assistance both in terms of emergency relief and assistance with claims.

Despite the redirected mission, increased funding was not recommended by the original 2008 Subcommittee and, thus, the KCDVA operated on an average of \$174,000 in General Fund support from 2000 to 2011 until it was increased to \$254,133 in 2012. The additional funding was used to increase part-time staffing levels, perform required computer updates and augment the emergency needs budget.

Looking forward to 2013 and beyond, it is projected that even with an increase in FY2012 and FY2013, the effectiveness of the Department will be limited in meeting the needs of local veterans. In 2011, KCDVA received 125 requests for emergency assistance totaling \$34,071. Between January and June 2012, 99 requests were received totaling \$46,950. While KCDVA staff attempts to budget according to developing trends, it is difficult to anticipate the total need. Veterans are referred first to mainstream resources when available.

The following recaps the impact of declining revenues, and resulting budget adjustments that have been made during the past three years to accommodate unmet needs:

- **2010** – Services were expanded at the same time the office experienced a budget reduction of \$15,877. This budget reduction resulted in a revision of the emergency relief policy. The revision reduced the accessibility of emergency grants for food, rent and utilities from two times per year to one time per year for war era veterans. In addition to the reduced accessibility of grants, the criteria for a war veteran were increased from one day war era service to 90 days of war era service.
- **2011** – The department again underwent a budget reduction (\$6,776) which resulted in an unmet need in utility and rental assistance of \$5,991. During the months of November and December, veterans needing help with these items could not get assistance through the Department.
- **2012** – A budget increase allowed for the continuation of the expanded services in benefits counseling and as well as an increase in the emergency relief fund. However, current projected unmet needs for the remainder of 2012 in utilities and rent is \$25,988. This is due to the increased awareness of the Department, limited community resources and influx of returning veterans. Anticipated additional dollars needed to cover burial expenses for 2012 is \$15,520. This coincides with a report provided by the Essential Needs Task Force revealing that in 2012, \$410,000 was reduced from local area resources for assistance with utilities.

B. Inadequate Outreach

Although the KCDVA takes advantage of outreach opportunities that are presented to the department, there is inadequate staff to conduct outreach. Currently, the Department employs one full time employee and three part time employees. Since the reorganization of the KCDVA in 2009, staff has played a more critical role in assisting veterans. The processing of VA pension and benefit claims by the Department has created greater awareness and visibility in the community; the same time, it has vastly improved the services veterans receive in Kent County. In 2011, for example, every full time position generated \$974,000 in claims on behalf of veterans, a 1,480% return on investment. These new dollars benefit all of Kent County. The Subcommittee has determined that, based on the high volume of claims processed by staff, increasing staffing by just one full time employee would greatly increase the ability of the KCDVA to support and serve veterans in Kent County.

C. Bureaucratic Benefits Process

The average time to process a single claim through Detroit Regional VA office is approximately 15 to 18 months, with 66% of claims pending over 125 days according to Congressman Dan Benishek M.D. of Michigan's first congressional district.¹¹ The process is time-consuming and confusing, but can be expedited greatly when trained Service Officers assist in completing the cumbersome amount of paperwork. Currently, the KCDVA average process time on claims generated in their office is 6 months, one third the average of Detroit Regional VA. This is due to KCDVA utilizing the Fully Developed Claim Program. This program ensures that when claims for disability and compensation benefits are received by VA, they are complete with all

¹¹ Dr. Benishek to Announce Plan to Ease Veterans Claims Backlog article

information and evidence required by law to adjudicate claims. Not all veteran service organization use this program. Moreover, veterans or their eligible dependants do not always use a service organization to submit claims. Currently, an alarming 45% of the 1.6 million veterans who served in the Iraq and Afghanistan wars are seeking compensation for injuries that are service related. This, in addition to the increase in claims related to the Vietnam War and Agent Orange exposure and multiple other issues has created a backlog of more than 4.4 million claims awaiting process in the 56 regional offices across the nation.

D. Inflexibility of Community Resources

There are several resources in Kent County to assist veterans, but many organizations run into challenges to meet identified needs due to inflexibility. For example, HUD vouchers are available for housing veterans, but they will not provide funding for security deposits. In another example, the Department of Human Services will provide assistance toward covering utility payments, but only once per year. Because community resources are limited and restrictive, many veterans organizations and individuals turn to KCDVA for assistance, as it has been designed to be a “one-stop shop” and can be more flexible in providing assistance. Limited funding for emergency relief means these requests are difficult for the County to fill, and as a result, KCDVA has turned away veterans looking for assistance towards the end of the budget year for the past two years.

E. Restrictive Definitions of a Qualifying Veteran

In order to be prudent, KCDVA defines a qualifying veteran as one who has served at least 90 days active duty during a war era in the armed forces, and those veterans may only apply for assistance once per year. This is in contrast to the previous definition that allowed qualifying veterans who have served only one day of active duty during a war era to apply for assistance once every six months. KCDVA also limits assistance to “indigent” veterans, defined as 250% of the federal poverty level. Additionally, the state defines a qualifying veteran as one who served in a war era for a minimum of 180 days, which essentially excludes service members from May 8, 1975- August 1, 1990.

F. Anticipated Future Needs

With the war in Iraq over and the war in Afghanistan winding down, veterans are returning home in significant numbers, with many news reports and statistics demonstrating significant challenges once they are back on American soil. The 2013 federal Department of Defense Budget and Priority Choices Report indicate a reduction of 100,000 active military personnel, 80,000 from Active Army and 20,000 from Active Marine Forces. Michigan’s unemployment rate among post-9/11 veterans was 29.4% in 2010, and record numbers of these veterans suffer from PTSD, TBI and high suicide rates. In short, the need for service will continue to grow over the next several years as these veterans assimilate back into civilian life.

IV. Subcommittee Recommendations

The Subcommittee believes that every veteran residing in Kent County should have access to services provided by the Kent County Veterans Affairs Department. As a leader in the State, Kent County has an important responsibility to ensure that its veterans are well-cared for and receiving benefits they have earned as a result of their service to our country.

Based on this belief, as well as exhaustive research and conversations and interviews with veterans groups, it is clear to this committee that the 2008 reorganization has been successful in creating a “one-stop shop” for veterans; however, the need for service has grown exponentially, partly due to the success of the KCDVA in promoting its mission to the community. To fulfill this vision and to adequately serve the indigent veteran population in Kent County, the Subcommittee has determined that additional funding is necessary. This subcommittee recommends the following:

1) Increase general fund (GF) support for FY2014

The Subcommittee recommends that the Kent County Board of Commissioners strongly consider increasing the County General Fund appropriation in FY2014 above the \$296,044 that was budgeted in FY2013. At a minimum, an additional \$50,000 for FY2014 will increase VSOs by .5 FTE, for a total of 3.0 FTE VSOs (2 FT/2 PT), and increase funding for direct services to \$155,000, which is \$26,000 more than the FY2013 budget.

As stated above, the work that the KCDVA does on behalf of veterans impacts the broader community. In the Department’s brief history, for every VSO FTE returns approximately \$974,000 to the community annually, yielding an overall 2,310% return on investment. Moreover, the additional outreach performed by the KCDVA since the 2008 reorganization continues to generate additional requests for services. As more veterans return from the wars in Iraq and Afghanistan, these requests are only anticipated to increase. This Subcommittee recommends that the Board of Commissioners consider that the need for help is growing within the veteran community and that county services are often the last resort for help within the community for indigent veterans. A minimum of \$50,000 for FY2014 will help serve those needs, both in emergency services as well as assistance to veterans in completing claims.

2) The County should consider placement of a Veterans Service Millage before the voters in 2014

The Subcommittee recognizes that while the Board of Commissioners has the authority to levy up to 1/10 of a mill (0.10 mill) without a vote of the people under PA 214 of 1899, the idea of increasing property taxes without a vote of its residents is not consistent with the Board of Commissioners’ standards for transparency and openness.

To that point, the Subcommittee recommends that the County considers placement of a Veterans Service Millage before the voters in 2014. It is expected that a millage rate of between .025 mill (2.5 hundredth of a mill) and .050 mill (5 hundredth of a mill) would generate between \$500,000 and \$1,000,000 based on 2013 taxable values. For an individual property owner with a true cash value of \$200,000, a .050 mill would equate to a \$5.00 increase in taxes. For an individual

property owner with a true cash value of \$100,000, a .050 mill would equate to a \$2.50 increase in taxes. The additional funding would be utilized to increase the number of County VSOs to accommodate for the increased requests for assistance, both in terms of emergency relief and assistance with claims. This will help to reduce the disparity in federal funding received by Kent County veterans. Moreover, it would help the Department increase its outreach to veterans and allow a portion of General Fund dollars to be utilized for other purposes.

Attachment A.

| Coalition VFW, MOPH, MCL, AL, DAV | DAV Member of the Coalition of Service Orgs. | Livingston | Oakland | Washtenaw | Kent |
|---|--|--|------------------------------------|---|---|
| Number of Veterans 2010 | 703,970 | 12,694 | 70,715 | 17,389 | 35,894 |
| Number of Veterans 2011 | 684,492 | 12,534 | 68,956 | 16,991 | 34,938 |
| Funding | State of Michigan Grant 3.3 Mil | \$556,000 | \$1,742,179 | \$685,080 | \$262,133 |
| Federal Dollars 2010 VA GDX | Total for MI 2,400,155,000 | \$32,179,000 | \$197,821,000 | \$106,170,000 | \$110,885,000 |
| Federal Dollars 2011 VA GDX | Total for MI 2,705,517,000 | \$41,249,000 | \$221,589,000 | \$89,904,000 | \$117,838,000 |
| County Ranking (2010) Overall | 53 National | 73 | 60 | 4 | 47 |
| County Ranking (2011) Overall | 53 National | 67 | 70 | 16 | 73 |
| Comp/Pen Total 2010 | \$1,136,035,000 | \$15,792,000 | \$107,413,000 | \$26,278,000 | \$57,404,000 |
| Comp/Pen Total 2011 | \$1,412,135,000 | \$21,806,000 | \$124,013,000 | \$31,079,000 | \$63,224,000 |
| Increase Comp/Pen from 2010 to 2011 | \$276,100,000 | \$6,014,000 | \$16,600,000 | \$4,801,000 | \$5,820,000 |
| 2011 by CVSO Comp/Pen | N/A | \$1,497,794 | | \$3,432,123 | \$2,621,760 |
| County Service Office Portion of Increase | N/A | 25% | | 71% | 45% |
| Average Award per CVSO 2011 | N/A | \$599,118 | | \$858,031 | \$1,048,704 |
| Number of Service Officers | 12 DAV 19 VFW 7 AL 9 MCL 5 MOPH | 2.5 | 16 | 4 | 2.5 |
| WWII Main Issues | 25% of clients hearing loss | 23% of clients Pension, Medical care | 31% of clients Pension | 35% of clients Pension, Medical | 42% of clients Pension, Medical |
| Korean Main Issues | 5% of Clients Hearing Loss, cold injuries | 10% of clients Pension, Medical care | 10% of clients Pension, | 11% of clients Pension, Medical | 13% of clients Pension, Medical |
| Vietnam Main Issues | 65% of clients AO, PTSD | 43% of clients PTSD, AO, other disabilities | 40% of clients AO | 30% of clients AO, Medical | 31% of clients AO, PTSD, financial |
| Gulf War Main Issues | No Response | 8% of clients PTSD, other wounds, employment, financial aid | 6% of clients PTSD | 2% of clients PTSD, financial aid | 8% of clients financial aid, employment |
| OEF/OIF Main Issues | 5% of clients PTSD, TBI, ortho injuries | 9% of clients PTSD, TBI, Amputations, Education, Employment, Financial aid, medical, housing | 7% of clients PTSD, TBI | 3% of clients PTSD, TBI, financial aid, education | 1% of clients PTSD, TBI, financial aid |
| Peacetime Veterans | Ortho other Injuries | 7% of clients Ortho other Injuries | 6% of clients Ortho other Injuries | 19% of clients Ortho other Injuries | 5% of clients Ortho other Injuries |

County of Kent Department of Veterans' Affairs



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www.accesskent.com/Health/VeteransAffairs

VETERANS' AFFAIRS COMMITTEE

*Paul Potter, Chair
Fred Chambers
Harold Mast
Mary Johnson
Edward Perdue*

Kent County Department of Veterans' Affairs Committee Emergency Needs Policy

Purpose

The Kent County Indigent Veteran's Relief Fund is intended for emergency financial or living hardship situations. The Kent County Department of Veterans' Affairs Committee will ensure that the resources of the Emergency Relief Fund are used only when all other resources have been exhausted. Other resources include, but are not limited to, DHS, ACSET, Salvation Army, ACCESS, and Michigan Veterans Trust Fund. The Veterans' Affairs Committee has a dual responsibility concerning Shelter-related Emergency Assistance.

1. Real Assistance – Aid that will correct the emergency permanently.
2. Stewardship – Serve the maximum number of veterans in an equitable manner.

Key Definitions

Veteran: For purposes of the Kent County Indigent Veteran's Relief Fund, a veteran is a person who served 90 days in the active military forces during a period of war or who received the armed forces expeditionary or other campaign service medal during an emergency condition and who was discharged or released from active duty under honorable conditions. A "veteran" also includes those individuals who died while in active duty with any American military force as provided in MCLA 35.21.

Resident: A veteran is a resident of Kent County if he/she maintains an actual residence in the County and intends to make the County his/her permanent home as verified by appropriate documentation.

Indigent: A veteran is indigent if he/she has no money, property or insufficient money or property available to pay for his/her immediate need from want, including, but not limited to, food, clothing, shelter and/or medical care.

Means Test: Veterans or their eligible family member will be subject to a means test to determine eligibility for Emergency Relief Funds. The Kent County Department of Veterans Affairs will use the Income Threshold for VA Health Care benefits.

| Financial Income Thresholds for VA Health Care Benefits | | |
|---|------------------------------------|--|
| Financial Test Year 2011 | Veteran with: | Free VA Health Care: (0% service connected {noncompensable} and nonservice-connected veterans only): |
| | 0 dependents | \$29,402 or less |
| | 1 dependent | \$35,284 or less |
| | 2 dependents | \$37,304 or less |
| | 3 dependents | \$39,324 or less |
| | 4 dependents | \$41,344 or less |
| | For each additional dependent add: | \$2,020 |

Emergency Assistance:

1. Assistance may be applied for once within a 12-month period. Exceptions to this rule can be made by the Kent County Department of Veteran’s Affairs Committee at regularly scheduled meetings.
2. Applicant must provide proof of an emergency need, which includes proof of all household income, cash assets, employment, and expenses. Financial resources include, but are not limited to, Veterans’ Administration Disability Compensation, Department of Defense Retirement payments, and Social Security.
3. Any person receiving assistance through the Emergency Relief Fund who is found to have falsified information shall become ineligible for any assistance and can be prosecuted to the fullest extent of the law.

I. Emergency Grocery:

1. Grocery vouchers are given to purchase food, personal hygiene products, cleaning supplies, and/or paper household items.
2. Assistance is given in the following amounts; \$100.00 for the applicant, \$50.00 a second family member and \$15.00 for each additional family member.

II. Shelter-related:

1. Shelter-related includes rent and utility assistance. All Shelter-related expenses are based on the premise that the rent/mortgage payment should not

Attachment B.

exceed 40% of the household's pre-tax (gross) income. Those individuals receiving non-taxed income will have a limit of 50%. Further adjustments may be made if utility payments are included in the rent.

2. The applicant should have enough regular income to meet normal shelter-related expenses. A budget will be done for all shelter-related emergency applicants. The budget will show all household income and expenses. Receipts will be required showing payments made in the three months prior to the application for emergency needs.

- Rent Assistance

1. Rental Agreement: Applicant must have a written rental agreement with the property owner, property management firm, or lease holder. Rental agreement must be in applicant's name.
2. Eviction: Applicant must show proof of imminent danger of eviction. Emergency Assistance requires a court order eviction notice. The landlord must agree to accept one month back rent payment to stop the eviction action.
3. Rent limit: The maximum one month rental assistance may not exceed the current HUD Fair Market Rent (Attachment A).
4. Security Deposit/First Month's Rent: Applicant must provide written documentation from the landlord stating that the family has been approved for occupancy provided that the required security deposit is paid in full, the anticipated date of move in, the unit's monthly rental amount, and the required deposit amount.
5. Shared Dwelling: In the case of applicant sharing a dwelling with another person (not a "family member" as defined in this policy) the rental amount will be prorated by the number of non-family members living in the dwelling.

- Utility Shut-off Prevention

1. The applicant must have a current disconnect or final notice from a necessary utility company. Necessary utilities include heating fuel, electric, or water services.
2. Alternative Heating Methods: For fuel oil, propane or wood, a statement on letterhead refusing further service, also stating the minimum amount that can be delivered is required. The maximum amount alternative heating method assistance may not exceed \$750 per 12-month period.

3. Shared Dwelling: In the case of applicant sharing a dwelling with another person (not a “family member” as defined in this policy) the heating assistance costs will be prorated by the number of non-family members living in the dwelling.

- **Application Process**

To receive assistance from the Kent County Veterans’ Relief Fund, an eligible applicant must complete the following process:

1. Complete an application for assistance as provided by the Kent County Department of Veteran Affairs (“DVA”);
2. Document the applicant’s eligibility for assistance to the Kent County DVA; and
3. Verify any outstanding bills for which he/she is seeking relief;

Once the application is submitted, a County Veteran Service Officer from the DVA will investigate the request and work with the applicant to accumulate the required documentation and verification needed to determine if the request for assistance should be granted. Failure by the applicant to fully complete the application, and/or provide the required documentation or verification may result in a denial of the applicant’s claim. Upon receiving all of the necessary information, the County Veteran Service Officer shall complete the investigation and the Department of Veterans Affairs shall approve or deny or partially approve or deny the application within 30 days.

In addition, if the Department of Veteran Affairs staff member investigating a claim shall suspect that a request for indigent funding is an attempt by the requesting party to abuse or defraud the system, or if the staff member encounters unusual circumstances surrounding a claim, he/she shall not make a ruling on such claims, but shall refer the claim to the Kent County Veterans Affairs Committee at its next regularly scheduled meeting for review and decision.

- **Appeals Rights**

An applicant whose application for assistance has been partially or completely denied by the Kent County DVA may take the following action:

1. File an appeal with the Kent County Veterans Affairs Committee. Such an appeal must be filed in writing within 21 days after receiving written notice from the Kent County Department of Veterans Affairs that the veteran’s request for assistance has been denied.

Attachment B.

- a. The written appeal shall be considered at the next meeting of the Kent County Veteran's Affairs Committee.
- b. The decision of the Veteran's Affairs Committee shall be final.

Attachment C.

MICHIGAN

| County/ Congressional District | Veteran Population* | Total Expenditure | Compensation & Pension | Constructi on | Education & Vocational Rehabilitation/ Employment | Loan Guaranty# | General Operating Expenses | Insurance & Indemnities | Medical Care | Unique Patients** | Dollar Amount per Veteran | Comp and Pen per Veteran |
|--------------------------------------|------------------------|----------------------|---------------------------|------------------|--|-------------------|----------------------------------|----------------------------|--------------|----------------------|------------------------------------|--------------------------------|
| IRON | 1,313 | \$ 13,071 | \$ 5,838 | \$ - | \$ 66 | \$ - | \$ - | \$ 79 | \$ 7,087 | 666 | \$ 9.96 | \$ 4.45 |
| ALGER | 996 | \$ 6,965 | \$ 4,194 | \$ - | \$ 121 | \$ - | \$ - | \$ 229 | \$ 2,421 | 360 | \$ 6.99 | \$ 4.21 |
| DICKINSON | 2,613 | \$ 37,774 | \$ 10,586 | \$ 2,632 | \$ 615 | \$ - | \$ 1,741 | \$ 495 | \$ 21,705 | 1,286 | \$ 14.46 | \$ 4.05 |
| ONTONAGON | 954 | \$ 6,880 | \$ 3,634 | \$ - | \$ 130 | \$ - | \$ - | \$ 32 | \$ 3,084 | 398 | \$ 7.21 | \$ 3.81 |
| CHEBOYGAN | 2,518 | \$ 13,546 | \$ 9,497 | \$ - | \$ 383 | \$ - | \$ - | \$ 128 | \$ 3,538 | 759 | \$ 5.38 | \$ 3.77 |
| MARQUETTE | 6,591 | \$ 39,109 | \$ 24,737 | \$ - | \$ 2,330 | \$ - | \$ - | \$ 326 | \$ 11,716 | 1,843 | \$ 5.93 | \$ 3.75 |
| DELTA | 3,935 | \$ 29,222 | \$ 14,050 | \$ - | \$ 876 | \$ - | \$ - | \$ 295 | \$ 14,002 | 1,492 | \$ 7.43 | \$ 3.57 |
| MONTMORENCY | 1,047 | \$ 5,314 | \$ 3,645 | \$ - | \$ 52 | \$ - | \$ - | \$ 52 | \$ 1,565 | 302 | \$ 5.08 | \$ 3.48 |
| CALHOUN | 10,944 | \$ 85,132 | \$ 35,431 | \$ - | \$ 2,488 | \$ - | \$ - | \$ 675 | \$ 46,537 | 3,207 | \$ 7.78 | \$ 3.24 |
| MACKINAC | 1,064 | \$ 5,791 | \$ 3,434 | \$ - | \$ 126 | \$ - | \$ - | \$ 113 | \$ 2,118 | 322 | \$ 5.44 | \$ 3.23 |
| LAKE | 1,269 | \$ 6,028 | \$ 4,056 | \$ - | \$ 148 | \$ - | \$ - | \$ 33 | \$ 1,791 | 350 | \$ 4.75 | \$ 3.20 |
| MENOMINEE | 2,664 | \$ 16,793 | \$ 8,471 | \$ - | \$ 404 | \$ - | \$ - | \$ 124 | \$ 7,794 | 1,004 | \$ 6.30 | \$ 3.18 |
| OSCODA | 1,113 | \$ 5,683 | \$ 3,516 | \$ - | \$ 113 | \$ - | \$ - | \$ 22 | \$ 2,032 | 323 | \$ 5.11 | \$ 3.16 |
| ALCONA | 1,655 | \$ 8,095 | \$ 5,191 | \$ - | \$ 170 | \$ - | \$ - | \$ 113 | \$ 2,621 | 525 | \$ 4.89 | \$ 3.14 |
| SCHOOLCRAFT | 1,000 | \$ 4,963 | \$ 2,964 | \$ - | \$ 57 | \$ - | \$ - | \$ 59 | \$ 1,883 | 287 | \$ 4.96 | \$ 2.96 |
| BARAGA | 957 | \$ 5,692 | \$ 2,787 | \$ - | \$ 115 | \$ - | \$ - | \$ 45 | \$ 2,746 | 275 | \$ 5.95 | \$ 2.91 |
| HOUGHTON | 2,856 | \$ 16,140 | \$ 8,126 | \$ - | \$ 1,241 | \$ - | \$ - | \$ 225 | \$ 6,548 | 985 | \$ 5.65 | \$ 2.85 |
| CLARE | 3,488 | \$ 19,572 | \$ 9,837 | \$ - | \$ 543 | \$ - | \$ 918 | \$ 134 | \$ 8,139 | 960 | \$ 5.61 | \$ 2.82 |
| CHIPPEWA | 3,763 | \$ 16,990 | \$ 10,610 | \$ - | \$ 1,054 | \$ - | \$ - | \$ 154 | \$ 5,172 | 1,003 | \$ 4.51 | \$ 2.82 |
| OGEAW | 2,497 | \$ 13,332 | \$ 6,840 | \$ - | \$ 248 | \$ - | \$ - | \$ 60 | \$ 6,184 | 700 | \$ 5.34 | \$ 2.74 |
| MISSAUKEE | 1,328 | \$ 6,368 | \$ 3,627 | \$ - | \$ 321 | \$ - | \$ - | \$ 15 | \$ 2,405 | 305 | \$ 4.79 | \$ 2.73 |
| GLADWIN | 2,750 | \$ 14,030 | \$ 7,412 | \$ - | \$ 312 | \$ - | \$ - | \$ 135 | \$ 6,171 | 731 | \$ 5.10 | \$ 2.69 |
| ROSCOMMON | 2,790 | \$ 13,352 | \$ 7,484 | \$ - | \$ 360 | \$ - | \$ - | \$ 82 | \$ 5,426 | 709 | \$ 4.79 | \$ 2.68 |
| WEXFORD | 2,687 | \$ 11,445 | \$ 7,110 | \$ - | \$ 609 | \$ - | \$ - | \$ 95 | \$ 3,632 | 706 | \$ 4.26 | \$ 2.65 |
| GRATIOT | 2,904 | \$ 13,424 | \$ 7,665 | \$ - | \$ 432 | \$ - | \$ - | \$ 152 | \$ 5,174 | 674 | \$ 4.62 | \$ 2.64 |
| IOSCO | 3,779 | \$ 17,246 | \$ 9,815 | \$ - | \$ 370 | \$ - | \$ - | \$ 302 | \$ 6,760 | 1,028 | \$ 4.56 | \$ 2.60 |
| ARENAC | 1,626 | \$ 7,180 | \$ 4,212 | \$ - | \$ 221 | \$ - | \$ - | \$ 31 | \$ 2,717 | 388 | \$ 4.42 | \$ 2.59 |
| LUCE | 734 | \$ 2,982 | \$ 1,873 | \$ - | \$ 24 | \$ - | \$ - | \$ 54 | \$ 1,031 | 133 | \$ 4.06 | \$ 2.55 |
| MANISTEE | 2,472 | \$ 9,477 | \$ 6,290 | \$ - | \$ 290 | \$ - | \$ - | \$ 204 | \$ 2,694 | 620 | \$ 3.83 | \$ 2.54 |
| KALKASKA | 1,779 | \$ 7,007 | \$ 4,472 | \$ - | \$ 215 | \$ - | \$ - | \$ 38 | \$ 2,281 | 430 | \$ 3.94 | \$ 2.51 |
| SANILAC | 3,411 | \$ 14,146 | \$ 8,525 | \$ - | \$ 544 | \$ - | \$ - | \$ 191 | \$ 4,886 | 1,006 | \$ 4.15 | \$ 2.50 |
| NEWAYGO | 4,220 | \$ 15,823 | \$ 10,390 | \$ - | \$ 762 | \$ - | \$ - | \$ 126 | \$ 4,545 | 995 | \$ 3.75 | \$ 2.46 |
| HURON | 2,795 | \$ 12,423 | \$ 6,864 | \$ - | \$ 312 | \$ - | \$ - | \$ 271 | \$ 4,976 | 764 | \$ 4.44 | \$ 2.46 |
| HILLSDALE | 3,518 | \$ 15,974 | \$ 8,574 | \$ - | \$ 699 | \$ - | \$ - | \$ 110 | \$ 6,591 | 840 | \$ 4.54 | \$ 2.44 |
| GOGEBIC | 2,082 | \$ 11,548 | \$ 5,029 | \$ - | \$ 430 | \$ - | \$ - | \$ 80 | \$ 6,010 | 792 | \$ 5.55 | \$ 2.42 |
| OSCEOLA | 2,099 | \$ 9,276 | \$ 4,999 | \$ - | \$ 312 | \$ - | \$ - | \$ 84 | \$ 3,880 | 492 | \$ 4.42 | \$ 2.38 |
| BENZIE | 1,812 | \$ 7,236 | \$ 4,291 | \$ - | \$ 254 | \$ - | \$ - | \$ 152 | \$ 2,539 | 416 | \$ 3.99 | \$ 2.37 |
| JACKSON | 12,009 | \$ 52,859 | \$ 28,290 | \$ - | \$ 2,447 | \$ - | \$ - | \$ 469 | \$ 21,653 | 2,655 | \$ 4.40 | \$ 2.36 |
| CRAWFORD | 1,758 | \$ 7,412 | \$ 4,131 | \$ - | \$ 314 | \$ - | \$ - | \$ 35 | \$ 2,931 | 372 | \$ 4.22 | \$ 2.35 |
| SAGINAW | 14,602 | \$ 70,642 | \$ 33,931 | \$ - | \$ 2,910 | \$ - | \$ 2,810 | \$ 694 | \$ 30,297 | 3,780 | \$ 4.84 | \$ 2.32 |
| TUSCOLA | 4,571 | \$ 18,720 | \$ 10,545 | \$ - | \$ 760 | \$ - | \$ - | \$ 155 | \$ 7,260 | 1,003 | \$ 4.10 | \$ 2.31 |
| MIDLAND | 6,070 | \$ 24,879 | \$ 13,825 | \$ - | \$ 1,399 | \$ - | \$ - | \$ 520 | \$ 9,134 | 1,325 | \$ 4.10 | \$ 2.28 |
| BAY | 8,990 | \$ 36,181 | \$ 20,368 | \$ - | \$ 1,620 | \$ - | \$ - | \$ 358 | \$ 13,834 | 1,956 | \$ 4.02 | \$ 2.27 |
| ISABELLA | 3,872 | \$ 16,121 | \$ 8,701 | \$ - | \$ 1,769 | \$ - | \$ - | \$ 237 | \$ 5,414 | 772 | \$ 4.16 | \$ 2.25 |
| BRANCH | 3,641 | \$ 15,310 | \$ 8,176 | \$ - | \$ 454 | \$ - | \$ - | \$ 238 | \$ 6,441 | 819 | \$ 4.21 | \$ 2.25 |
| ALPENA | 2,960 | \$ 12,152 | \$ 6,608 | \$ - | \$ 440 | \$ - | \$ - | \$ 236 | \$ 4,868 | 1,010 | \$ 4.11 | \$ 2.23 |
| LENAWEE | 8,341 | \$ 33,711 | \$ 18,352 | \$ - | \$ 2,047 | \$ - | \$ - | \$ 341 | \$ 12,971 | 1,751 | \$ 4.04 | \$ 2.20 |
| SHIAWASSEE | 5,541 | \$ 20,508 | \$ 12,046 | \$ - | \$ 1,542 | \$ - | \$ - | \$ 223 | \$ 6,596 | 980 | \$ 3.70 | \$ 2.17 |

Attachment C.

MICHIGAN

| County/ Congressional District | Veteran Population* | Total Expenditure | Compensation & Pension | Constructi on | Education & Vocational Rehabilitation/ Employment | Loan Guaranty# | General Operating Expenses | Insurance & Indemnities | Medical Care | Unique Patients** | Dollar Amount per Veteran | Comp and Pen per Veteran |
|--------------------------------------|------------------------|----------------------|---------------------------|------------------|--|-------------------|----------------------------------|----------------------------|---------------------|----------------------|------------------------------------|--------------------------------|
| MASON | 2,976 | \$ 10,114 | \$ 6,441 | \$ - | \$ 457 | \$ - | \$ - | \$ 315 | \$ 2,901 | 511 | \$ 3.40 | \$ 2.16 |
| ANTRIM | 2,654 | \$ 8,518 | \$ 5,716 | \$ - | \$ 265 | \$ - | \$ - | \$ 162 | \$ 2,376 | 490 | \$ 3.21 | \$ 2.15 |
| MONTCALM | 4,983 | \$ 17,402 | \$ 10,670 | \$ - | \$ 797 | \$ - | \$ - | \$ 130 | \$ 5,806 | 933 | \$ 3.49 | \$ 2.14 |
| TRAVERSE | 7,457 | \$ 25,080 | \$ 15,847 | \$ - | \$ 2,042 | \$ - | \$ - | \$ 592 | \$ 6,599 | 1,508 | \$ 3.36 | \$ 2.13 |
| EATON | 8,340 | \$ 27,651 | \$ 17,420 | \$ - | \$ 2,252 | \$ - | \$ - | \$ 422 | \$ 7,557 | 1,197 | \$ 3.32 | \$ 2.09 |
| BERRIEN | 11,633 | \$ 46,359 | \$ 24,299 | \$ - | \$ 2,701 | \$ - | \$ - | \$ 668 | \$ 18,692 | 2,937 | \$ 3.99 | \$ 2.09 |
| MUSKEGON | 14,245 | \$ 47,287 | \$ 29,693 | \$ - | \$ 2,996 | \$ - | \$ - | \$ 675 | \$ 13,923 | 2,998 | \$ 3.32 | \$ 2.08 |
| PRESQUE ISLE | 1,916 | \$ 6,571 | \$ 3,938 | \$ - | \$ 422 | \$ - | \$ - | \$ 37 | \$ 2,173 | 494 | \$ 3.43 | \$ 2.06 |
| KALAMAZOO | 14,604 | \$ 69,203 | \$ 29,801 | \$ 1,806 | \$ 6,260 | \$ - | \$ 5,110 | \$ 794 | \$ 25,431 | 3,130 | \$ 4.74 | \$ 2.04 |
| VAN BUREN | 6,056 | \$ 22,596 | \$ 12,301 | \$ - | \$ 1,193 | \$ - | \$ - | \$ 477 | \$ 8,625 | 1,114 | \$ 3.73 | \$ 2.03 |
| OCEANA | 2,452 | \$ 7,097 | \$ 4,970 | \$ - | \$ 295 | \$ - | \$ - | \$ 91 | \$ 1,742 | 424 | \$ 2.89 | \$ 2.02 |
| ST. CLAIR | 13,758 | \$ 44,614 | \$ 27,830 | \$ - | \$ 2,398 | \$ - | \$ - | \$ 661 | \$ 13,726 | 2,854 | \$ 3.24 | \$ 2.02 |
| INGHAM | 15,326 | \$ 56,409 | \$ 30,978 | \$ - | \$ 6,349 | \$ - | \$ - | \$ 1,391 | \$ 17,691 | 2,674 | \$ 3.68 | \$ 2.02 |
| BARRY | 4,965 | \$ 18,642 | \$ 10,024 | \$ - | \$ 925 | \$ - | \$ - | \$ 336 | \$ 7,358 | 1,025 | \$ 3.75 | \$ 2.02 |
| IONIA | 4,271 | \$ 14,595 | \$ 8,582 | \$ - | \$ 1,133 | \$ - | \$ - | \$ 178 | \$ 4,702 | 717 | \$ 3.42 | \$ 2.01 |
| GENESEE | 30,228 | \$ 100,947 | \$ 58,657 | \$ - | \$ 7,399 | \$ - | \$ - | \$ 1,815 | \$ 33,076 | 4,229 | \$ 3.34 | \$ 1.94 |
| OTSEGO | 2,296 | \$ 7,169 | \$ 4,443 | \$ - | \$ 239 | \$ - | \$ - | \$ 147 | \$ 2,340 | 503 | \$ 3.12 | \$ 1.93 |
| EMMET | 3,047 | \$ 9,268 | \$ 5,823 | \$ - | \$ 326 | \$ - | \$ - | \$ 226 | \$ 2,894 | 572 | \$ 3.04 | \$ 1.91 |
| MACOMB | 57,488 | \$ 177,801 | \$ 109,145 | \$ - | \$ 14,678 | \$ - | \$ - | \$ 3,912 | \$ 50,066 | 8,062 | \$ 3.09 | \$ 1.90 |
| KEWEENAW | 291 | \$ 1,068 | \$ 551 | \$ - | \$ 20 | \$ - | \$ - | \$ 2 | \$ 495 | 79 | \$ 3.68 | \$ 1.90 |
| ST. JOSEPH | 4,356 | \$ 17,055 | \$ 8,227 | \$ - | \$ 815 | \$ - | \$ - | \$ 256 | \$ 7,757 | 941 | \$ 3.92 | \$ 1.89 |
| MECOSTA | 3,769 | \$ 11,528 | \$ 6,944 | \$ - | \$ 967 | \$ - | \$ - | \$ 131 | \$ 3,485 | 580 | \$ 3.06 | \$ 1.84 |
| WASHTENAW | 16,991 | \$ 89,904 | \$ 31,079 | \$ 2,886 | \$ 9,443 | \$ - | \$ 8,208 | \$ 2,011 | \$ 36,277 | 3,124 | \$ 5.29 | \$ 1.83 |
| KENT | 34,938 | \$ 117,838 | \$ 63,224 | \$ - | \$ 12,049 | \$ - | \$ - | \$ 2,522 | \$ 40,043 | 7,604 | \$ 3.37 | \$ 1.81 |
| WAYNE | 107,386 | \$ 469,143 | \$ 193,434 | \$ 217 | \$ 23,262 | \$ - | \$ 31,332 | \$ 6,919 | \$ 213,979 | 22,299 | \$ 4.37 | \$ 1.80 |
| OAKLAND | 68,956 | \$ 221,589 | \$ 124,013 | \$ 547 | \$ 17,935 | \$ - | \$ 1,788 | \$ 7,267 | \$ 70,039 | 10,325 | \$ 3.21 | \$ 1.80 |
| LAPEER | 7,193 | \$ 21,087 | \$ 12,726 | \$ - | \$ 1,358 | \$ - | \$ - | \$ 307 | \$ 6,696 | 1,138 | \$ 2.93 | \$ 1.77 |
| MONROE | 11,871 | \$ 38,954 | \$ 20,972 | \$ - | \$ 2,548 | \$ - | \$ - | \$ 580 | \$ 14,853 | 1,838 | \$ 3.28 | \$ 1.77 |
| LIVINGSTON | 12,534 | \$ 41,249 | \$ 21,806 | \$ - | \$ 2,724 | \$ - | \$ - | \$ 831 | \$ 15,888 | 1,839 | \$ 3.29 | \$ 1.74 |
| CASS | 4,491 | \$ 14,321 | \$ 7,604 | \$ - | \$ 565 | \$ - | \$ - | \$ 161 | \$ 5,991 | 1,227 | \$ 3.19 | \$ 1.69 |
| ALLEGAN | 8,433 | \$ 24,760 | \$ 14,002 | \$ - | \$ 1,309 | \$ - | \$ - | \$ 463 | \$ 8,925 | 1,450 | \$ 2.94 | \$ 1.66 |
| CLINTON | 4,872 | \$ 13,063 | \$ 7,985 | \$ - | \$ 1,426 | \$ - | \$ - | \$ 218 | \$ 3,433 | 595 | \$ 2.68 | \$ 1.64 |
| LEELANAU | 2,555 | \$ 6,272 | \$ 4,177 | \$ - | \$ 316 | \$ - | \$ - | \$ 239 | \$ 1,539 | 434 | \$ 2.45 | \$ 1.63 |
| OTTAWA | 15,978 | \$ 39,938 | \$ 23,822 | \$ - | \$ 4,000 | \$ - | \$ - | \$ 798 | \$ 11,317 | 2,701 | \$ 2.50 | \$ 1.49 |
| CHARLEVOIX | 2,805 | \$ 6,890 | \$ 3,939 | \$ - | \$ 269 | \$ - | \$ - | \$ 132 | \$ 2,550 | 540 | \$ 2.46 | \$ 1.40 |
| MICHIGAN (Totals) | 684,492 | \$ 2,705,509 | \$ 1,412,135 | \$ 8,089 | \$ 165,648 | \$ - | \$ 51,907 | \$ 44,885 | \$ 1,022,845 | 137,585 | \$ 4.37 | \$ 2.41 |

Attachment D.

| | | | |
|--|--|---|---|
| Eaton County | Macomb County | Washtenaw County | Wayne County |
| DHS | DHS | DHS | DHS |
| MVTF | MVTF | MVTF | MVTF |
| Soldiers Relief | Soldiers Relief | Soldiers Relief | Soldiers Relief |
| Operation Homefront Michigan | Department of Senior Citizen Services | Lyon Township Community Chest | Wounded Warrior Assistance Program |
| Kalamazoo County | South Eastern Michigan Indians | National Kidney Foundation of Michigan | Adult Well Being Services |
| DHS | The Salvation Army-Eastern Michigan Division | Friends In Deed | Healthy Aging Services |
| MVTF | Monroe County | fair Food Network | Neighborhood Opportunity Fund |
| Soldiers Relief | DHS | Society of Saint Vincent De Paul | American House Foundation Program |
| Kalamazoo County Government | MVTF | Ann Arbor Community Center | CrossRoads of Michigan-CrossRoads East at Salem |
| Kalamazoo County Health and Community Services | Soldiers Relief | Ann Arbor department of Parks and Recreation | Society of Saint Vincent De Paul |
| Kent County | Monroe County Opportunity Program | Catholic Social Services County | Detroit Area Agency on Aging |
| DHS | The Salvation Army-Eastern Michigan | Northside Community | Health Emergency Lifeline Programs |
| MVTF | Zion Lutheran Church | Saint Clare of Assisi Episcopal Church | Matrix human Services |
| Soldiers Relief | Oakland County | The Salvation Army Eastern Division Ann Arbor Corps | Reuther Older Adult and Wellness Services |
| West Michigan Veterans Assistance Program | DHS | Faith In Action | Senior Alliance |
| ACSET | MVTF | Community Resource Center | Help's On The Way |
| Salvation Army | Soldiers Relief | Saline Area Social Service | The Salvation Army |
| Senior Neighbors | LightHouse Emergency Services | Hope America | Community Services |
| North Kent Services | OLHSA, A Community Action Agency | Hope Medical Clinic | Delray United Action Council |
| Urban League | Community Sharing | SOS Community Services | Helping Operations for People Empowerment |
| American Red Cross | Jewish Family Services | Northfield Human Services | latino family services |
| Multiple Church Benevolence Funds | Service Division | Multiple Church Benevolence Fund/Multiple Food Pantries | Multiple Church Benevolence Fund |
| Multiple Food Pantries | Rochester Area Neighborhood House | | Multiple Food Pantries |
| Lapeer and Lucas County | Troy People Concerned | | |
| DHS | Neighbor For Neighbor | | |
| MVTF | The Salvation Army | | |
| Soldiers Relief | Zion Lutheran Church | | |
| Michigan State University | | | |
| Cooperative Extension Services | | | |
| Human Development Commission | | | |
| Lapeer County Office | | | |
| North Branch Community Emergency Aid | | | |
| Lapeer County Department of Veterans Affairs | | | |
| Lenawee County | | | |
| DHS | | | |
| MVTF | | | |
| Soldiers Relief | | | |
| Lenawee Emergency and Affordable Housing Corporation | | | |
| Michigan Department of Military and Veterans Affairs | | | |

Attachment E.

| | Personell and Fringe | Operating Expense | Burial and Marker Reimbursements | Relief Fund | Total Budget | Funded Positions | Number of Veterans |
|------------------|----------------------|-------------------|----------------------------------|--------------|----------------|------------------|--------------------|
| Kent | | | | | | | 34,938 |
| GF | \$141,461.00 | \$4,672.00 | \$50,000.00 | \$58,000.00 | \$254,133.00 | 2.5 | |
| Millage | | | | | | | |
| Lvingston | | | | | | 3.5 | 12,534 |
| GF | | | | | | 1 | |
| Millage | | | | | | | |
| Oakland | | | | | | | 68,956 |
| GF | \$1,348,661.00 | \$216,957.00 | \$145,629.00 | | \$1,711,247.00 | 16 | |
| Millage | | | | \$30,932.00 | \$30,932.00 | | |
| Washtenaw | | | | | | | 16,991 |
| GF | \$393,712.00 | \$40,228.00 | | | \$433,940.00 | 5 | |
| Millage | \$79,140.00 | | \$37,000.00 | \$135,000.00 | \$251,140.00 | 1 | |



Gov. Rick Snyder: Michigan veterans' unemployment rate 'simply unacceptable'

Published: Wednesday, May 30, 2012, 6:00 PM Updated: Wednesday, May 30, 2012, 6:56 PM



By **Melissa Anders | manders@mlive.com**

MACKINAC ISLAND, MI —Michigan veterans returning from Iraq and Afghanistan face unique challenges to finding jobs, and it's not a problem that will solve itself as the economy improves.

Post 9/11 veterans in Michigan faced an unemployment rate of 29.4 percent in 2010, the highest in the nation, according to the **U.S. Congress Joint Economic Committee**. That's compared to 12.7 for the state as whole in 2010.

The rate for Michigan's post 9/11 veterans improved to **14.4 percent in 2011**, but the JEC warned that the relatively small veterans' population in many states makes it difficult to compare unemployment rates across states and over time.

The rate is worse for younger veterans. Nationwide, the annual average unemployment rate for veterans ages 18 to 24 was 30.2 percent.

The 29 percent figure is the more widely used statistic and is one that the governor, lawmakers and others point to when discussing the importance of helping veterans.

Gov. Rick Snyder called it "simply unacceptable" during his opening remarks at the Mackinac Policy Conference on Tuesday and urged the state's business leaders to do everything possible to help and employ Michigan's veterans.

The United States has been at war for 11 years now, and that creates a different dynamic than previous



Dustin Block | MLive.com

Justin Bajema, veteran and entrepreneur, and Matt Gallagher, senior fellow at the Iraq and Afghanistan Veterans of America, speak to attendees of the Mackinac Policy Conference on Wednesday.

Attachment F.

generations of veterans, said Maj. Gen. Gregory Vadnais, who directs Michigan's Military and Veterans Affairs and the Michigan Army and Air National Guard.

"(War) has almost become a way of employment," he said. "If you joined the National Guard or reserves ... after 2001, you've probably done two or three deployments. I've got several of my soldiers and airmen who have done four or five and they keep volunteering for the deployments because it's good money."

But as the nation pulls troops out of the Middle Eastern countries, they face grim job prospects at home.

State lawmakers, meanwhile, are considering legislation aimed at assisting veterans. **Bills** introduced this month would require the state to accept certain work experience gained through the armed forces for the licensing of plumbers, electricians and certain security guard positions.

It's often difficult for veterans to express how their military experience translates to civilian jobs.

"Many times we don't know how to self-promote," Matt Gallagher, senior fellow at the Iraq and Afghanistan Veterans of America told attendees of the policy conference.

Gallagher's group helps veterans market their skills to employers and connects them with resources for finding and landing a job.

Employers, on the other hand, need help understanding the benefits of hiring veterans, including tax breaks and other incentives.

Businesses can contact the U.S. or state departments of veterans affairs for **more information**.

Related: Purple Heart recipient: veterans' tenacity can help them transition into entrepreneurship

Email Melissa Anders at manders@mlive.com. Follow her on Twitter: [@MelissaDAnders](https://twitter.com/MelissaDAnders).

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Are States, Cities Ready for a Wave of Veterans?

Human services officials have a lot of work to do to prepare for the return of war vets from Iraq and Afghanistan.

BY: [JONATHAN WALTERS](#) | JUNE 12, 2012



JONATHAN WALTERS

Jonathan Walters is the Executive Editor of GOVERNING. He has been covering state and local public policy and administration for more than 30 years.

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Here's some sobering news straight from the House Committee on Veterans' Affairs: A backlog of nearly 900,000 disability claims -- with more than 65 percent of those claims pending for more than 125 days -- has amassed at the Department of Veterans Affairs (VA).

Why should this be alarming news to state and local government officials? Because it's just the beginning of a significant wave of returning veterans from Iraq and Afghanistan. These veterans won't just be coming back with the obvious physical disabilities. They'll be dealing with post-traumatic stress disorder, traumatic brain injuries, substance abuse problems and domestic violence issues, as well as with challenges finding housing and employment. Between the number of vets who need services and the logistics of connecting those vets with VA resources, there is little doubt that a lot of the responsibility will fall to states and localities.

In other words, state and local human services officials -- whether they like it or not and whether they're ready or not -- are going to be involuntarily drafted into caring for and helping veterans. At the same time, state and local officials will be turning to street-level service providers for help.

"Civilians in general don't really get that," says Steve Darman, who runs a veterans services program in upstate New York, and who also chairs a three-county veterans homeless assistance coalition. "They think the VA or the Department of Defense has it

Attachment G.

covered. But when a veteran comes home, it takes a community. Returning veterans are going to have a huge impact on communities around the country."

The good news is that there is a growing awareness among state and local officials about the impending tsunami of veterans, particularly among those in jurisdictions that either host or are in close proximity to large military bases. Those towns offer everything from job training and therapy to domestic violence and substance abuse prevention.

At the same time, the beefed up GI bill is certainly going to help when it comes to upgrading veterans' skills and education. New York's Darman says there are already 800 veterans enrolled in Monroe County Community College and another 500 at Erie County Community College. He also points to other promising programs for veterans, including a [model program in Rochester, N.Y.](#), that offers a wide variety of integrated services, which was started, says Darman, "by a bunch of pissed off Vietnam veterans whose families were breaking up and who couldn't find jobs." In New York City and two upstate counties, officials have launched courts that are just for veterans. They created this model after witnessing an alarming spike in run-ins with the law among veterans.

One thing is clear: A lot of the work being done is by citizen activists, particularly veterans. But it's equally clear that a significant and well-coordinated intergovernmental response is going to be required if veterans are going to get the services they need as they come home.

The feds have shown that they can move in a coordinated fashion on key veterans' issues, like homelessness. Darman's group, in fact, is involved in one of five pilot projects being funded nationally by the VA aimed at eliminating homelessness among veterans. Still, the VA has a startling backlog to clear. For its part, it blames an over-reliance on paper documents as one of the culprits. Officials at the VA say that its new paperless claims system will help the agency get a handle on the backlog. But even if this massive IT overhaul is actually successful, don't expect the VA to magically transform itself into a fabulously efficient bureaucracy finely honed to meet every veteran's needs.

So getting veterans a wide variety of health and human services is going to be crucial. It's not crucial just because we owe it to veterans; veterans, says Darman, have a lot to offer. "[Veterans] have great leadership and organizational skills, and they're not afraid to take risks. They can be amazing assets."

Homepage photo via [Shutterstock](#)

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VETERANS' RELIEF FUND
Act 214 of 1899

AN ACT to provide relief outside of the soldiers' home for honorably discharged indigent soldiers, sailors, marines, nurses and members of women's auxiliaries and the indigent wives, widows and minor children of such indigent or deceased soldiers, sailors, marines, nurses and members of women's auxiliaries, and to repeal certain acts and parts of acts.

History: 1899, Act 214, Eff. Sept. 23, 1899;—Am. 1944, 1st Ex. Sess., Act 23, Imd. Eff. Feb. 29, 1944.

The People of the State of Michigan enact:

35.21 Veterans' relief fund; levy and collection of annual tax; emergency appropriation; disposition.

Sec. 1. The county board of commissioners of each county shall annually levy, a tax not exceeding 1/10 of a mill on each dollar, to be levied and collected as provided by law, upon the taxable property of each township and city, for their respective counties, for the purpose of creating a fund for the relief of honorably discharged indigent members of the army, navy, air force, marine corps, coast guard, and women's auxiliaries of all wars or military expeditions in which the United States of America has been, is, or may hereafter be, a participant as prescribed in section 1 of Act No. 190 of the Public Acts of 1965, being section 35.61 of the Michigan Compiled Laws, and the indigent spouses, minor children, and parents of each such indigent or deceased member. Funds raised in accordance with the provisions of this section may be expended for the relief of indigent wives and children of active duty soldiers, sailors, marines, airmen, coast guardsmen, nurses, and members of the women's auxiliaries during the continuance of present hostilities and prior to their discharge. However, in any year which, in the opinion of the board, an emergency justifying the same exists, the board may appropriate a sum not to exceed 2/10 of a mill on each dollar for said purpose. The sums, when collected, shall be paid to the county treasurer of the county where such tax is levied in each of the counties in this state, to be paid out by the treasurer upon the order of the soldiers' relief commission duly signed by the chairperson and secretary of the commission. If any money in the fund is not necessary for the purpose for which it was raised, the money shall remain in the treasury of the county as a soldiers' relief fund, and shall be considered in raising future sums therefor.

History: 1899, Act 214, Eff. Sept. 23, 1899;—CL 1915, 1692;—Am. 1919, Act 370, Eff. Aug. 14, 1919;—CL 1929, 854;—Am. 1931, Act 257, Eff. Sept. 18, 1931;—Am. 1943, Act 114, Eff. July 30, 1943;—Am. 1944, 1st Ex. Sess., Act 23, Imd. Eff. Feb. 29, 1944;—CL 1948, 35.21;—Am. 1984, Act 168, Imd. Eff. June 29, 1984.

Former law: See Act 193 of 1889, being CL 1897, §§ 2074 to 2079.

35.22 Soldiers' relief commission; membership, appointment, terms, officers, vacancies, oaths of office, compensation, powers and duties, removal.

Sec. 2. (1) The judge of probate in each county shall appoint 3 persons, residents of such county, who shall be honorably discharged soldiers, sailors, marines, nurses or members of the women's auxiliaries, of the United States army and navy, volunteers or regulars, who served in a war in which the United States has been, is or may hereafter be, a participant, at least 1 of whom shall have served in World War I, to be known as the "soldiers' relief commission" of the county, with the powers and duties in this act provided. If there is no World War I veteran who is willing to serve, a veteran of a war as defined in Act No. 190 of the Public Acts of 1965, as amended, being sections 35.61 and 35.62 of the Compiled Laws of 1948, may be appointed to serve on the soldiers' relief commission.

(2) One of such persons shall be appointed for a term of 1 year; 1 for a term of 2 years; and 1 for a term of 3 years, and at the expiration of the term for which each of such persons was appointed, his successor shall be appointed for a term of 3 years thereafter. The persons so appointed shall organize by the selection of 1 of their number as chairman, and 1 as secretary, and in the event of the death, resignation, change of residence or other disability of any member of the commission, creating a vacancy, the judge of probate shall fill such vacancy by an appointment for the unexpired term. The members shall each file the constitutional oath of office with the probate court, and receive the proper certificate of their appointment. They shall be entitled to reasonable compensation for their services, to be fixed and paid by the board of supervisors of their respective counties. The judge of probate shall have authority to remove any member of such commission for cause.

History: 1899, Act 214, Eff. Sept. 23, 1899;—CL 1915, 1693;—CL 1929, 855;—Am. 1931, Act 257, Eff. Sept. 18, 1931;—Am. 1943, Act 114, Eff. July 30, 1943;—Am. 1944, 1st Ex. Sess., Act 23, Imd. Eff. Feb. 29, 1944;—CL 1948, 35.22;—Am. 1955, Act 225, Eff. Oct. 14, 1955;—Am. 1969, Act 53, Imd. Eff. July 21, 1969.

35.23 Soldiers' relief commission; determination of amounts to be granted and manner of payment; judicial review.

Sec. 3. The supervisor of each township and ward in each of the counties of this state, and where there is no ward supervisor the aldermen of the several wards of every incorporated city in this state, shall, on or before the last Monday in September in each year, make and place in the hands of the soldiers' relief commission of the county, a list of all the persons entitled to relief under the provisions of this act, and the soldiers' relief commission, on the first Monday in October in each year, shall proceed to determine the amount necessary for aid and relief to be granted such persons under this act, which shall be then and there recorded in the books to be kept by the secretary of said soldiers' relief commission. The commission may determine not only the sum to be paid, but the manner of paying the same, and may discontinue the payment of such relief in their discretion. Appeal may be taken therefrom to the circuit court of such county, by certiorari by filing application therefor with the clerk within 15 days following the making of such decision. The court shall hear the case de novo and its decision shall be final.

History: 1899, Act 214, Eff. Sept. 23, 1899;—CL 1915, 1694;—CL 1929, 856;—Am. 1931, Act 257, Eff. Sept. 18, 1931;—CL 1948, 35.23.

35.24 Emergency relief provision; limitations.

Sec. 4. Whenever any emergency shall arise in case of sickness, accident or death, which, in the opinion of any supervisor or alderman, needs relief, such supervisor or alderman, when inconvenient to consult any of the members of said commission, shall have the power to draw an order on the county treasurer for a sum not to exceed 10 dollars, and shall certify his action and the circumstances of the case to such soldiers' relief commission, which shall ratify the same, and such commission may grant such further relief at any time as it may deem necessary: Provided, however, That no claim for relief shall be allowed and paid which shall create a deficiency in the fund.

History: 1899, Act 214, Eff. Sept. 23, 1899;—CL 1915, 1695;—CL 1929, 857;—CL 1948, 35.24.

35.25 Soldiers' relief commission; annual report, contents.

Sec. 5. Said soldiers' relief commission shall make to the board of supervisors, at its October session in each year, a full report of its doings and the amount of relief money on hand, the amount expended during the year preceding, and the amount estimated for the year ensuing, and such further information and suggestions as they may consider necessary to the discharge of their duties under this act.

History: 1899, Act 214, Eff. Sept. 23, 1899;—CL 1915, 1696;—CL 1929, 858;—CL 1948, 35.25.

35.26 Unexpended funds; transfer to general fund.

Sec. 6. In cases where moneys have heretofore been raised by any city or township under the provisions of the acts hereinafter repealed, the balance of such moneys unexpended on the first day of April, 1900, may, by vote of the common council or township board, be transmitted to, and made a part of the general fund of such city or township, as the case may be.

History: 1899, Act 214, Eff. Sept. 23, 1899;—CL 1915, 1697;—CL 1929, 859;—CL 1948, 35.26.

35.27 Soldiers' relief commission; administration of oaths.

Sec. 7. The several commissioners appointed under this act shall have power to administer oaths in the execution of the duties of their offices.

History: 1899, Act 214, Eff. Sept. 23, 1899;—CL 1915, 1698;—CL 1929, 860;—CL 1948, 35.27.

Attachment I.



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Talent Dashboard

Attraction & Retention

Employment Environment

Unemployment Rate

Veteran Unemployment Rate

Workers in the Private Sector vs. Public Sector

Innovation

Global

Connections

Michigan Dashboard

Education Dashboard

Health & Wellness Dashboard

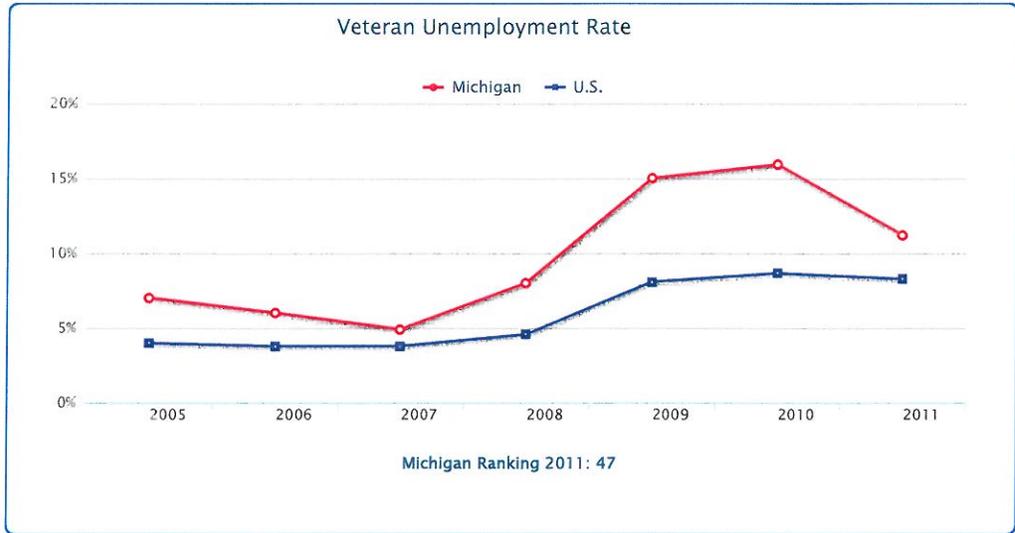
Infrastructure Dashboard

Public Safety Dashboard

Financial Health Dashboard

Veteran Unemployment Rate

Why it Matters: Veterans return to the labor market from service with skills that are valuable to our community and our economy, yet the rate of unemployment among veterans is higher than their civilian counterparts. Business and state government must work together to overcome this and better connect our talented veterans with employment opportunities.



Source: U.S. Department of Labor, Bureau of Labor Statistics

Updated annually in May



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Kent County Veterans Affairs The Economic Climate

October 2012

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Economic Climate

Overview

This report provides a brief profile of the economy and socio-economic state of veterans in Kent County and selected comparison areas. The intention is for the analysis to fit within a pre-existing report being written for the Kent County Veterans Affairs Subcommittee. Kent County Veterans Affairs is seeking additional funding in response to a funding shortage, relatively high unemployment, and unmet veteran needs among other reasons.

With few exceptions, veteran employment and wage trends mirror that of the civilian economy and therefore the economic climate in Kent County and West Michigan as a whole greatly impacts the state of affairs for veterans. West Michigan finds itself at an interesting time from economic stand point. As the national economy continues to grow at a relatively slow rate, parts of the West Michigan economy mimic the national trends while other industries – particularly in Manufacturing and Professional Services – are experiencing significant growth.¹ There is a relative consensus among economists predicting a moderate growth rate for the national economy in the third quarter of 2012 and moving into 2013.² Following the recession, statewide employment rose by 2.1 percent (2009 to 2011). “During this period, manufacturers accounted for more than half of the state’s employment gains, and assuming a reasonable manufacturing employment multiplier of 1.9, manufacturers could be credited for creating, directly and indirectly, all of the jobs in the state during this beginning phase of the expansion”³ West Michigan is one of the most export – and manufacturing – intensive metros in the nation and has recently been experiencing significant growth in these parts of the economy due to both industry trends and unique local factors.⁴

The veteran population being served in Kent County is older, has more homeless persons, and has a relatively high unemployment rate compared to similar counties in Michigan. While recent growth in employment reflects a positive economic climate, the severity of the recession and long-standing structural workforce dynamics (educational achievement gaps, income inequality, and racial/ethnic disparities) has resulted in significant negative impacts often manifesting in unemployment and underemployment. This holds true for many of those served by Kent County Veterans Affairs and necessitate adequate funding to support these populations sufficiently.

¹ (W.E. Upjohn Institute for Employment Research, 2012)

² Ibid.

³ Ibid.

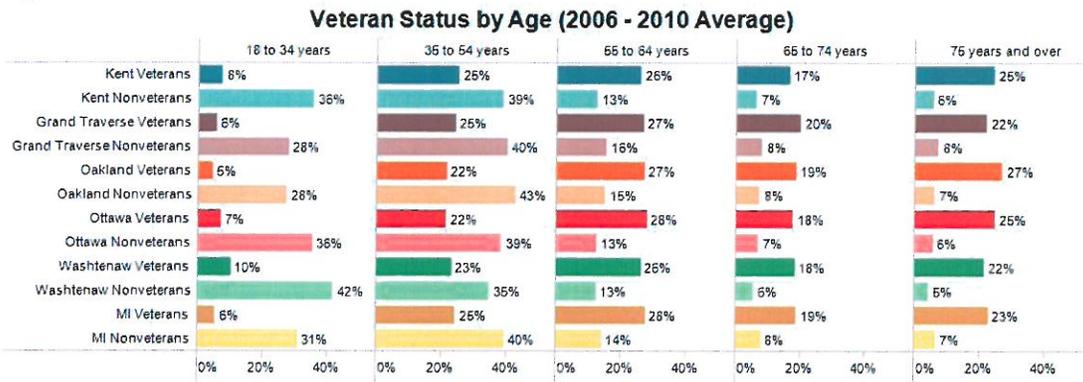
⁴ (Brookings Institute, 2012)

Demographics

Age

Veterans have long had an older distribution than the general population. Figure 1 is displayed to show variations in age distribution between the counties of interest and Michigan. Kent County closely follows the State with a slight over representation of those 75 years and over much like Oakland and Ottawa.

Figure 1



Source: U.S. Census Bureau. American Community Survey (2006-2010 Average).

Gender

Males dominate the gender distribution of veterans. As with age, Table 1 indicates Kent County very closely aligns with the State. Grand Traverse and Oakland counties have the most overrepresentation of males.

Table 1

| | Male | Female |
|----------------------------|-------|--------|
| Kent Veterans | 94.9% | 5.1% |
| Kent Nonveterans | 44.0% | 56.0% |
| Grand Traverse Veterans | 95.8% | 4.2% |
| Grand Traverse Nonveterans | 42.9% | 57.1% |
| Oakland Veterans | 95.1% | 4.9% |
| Oakland Nonveterans | 43.7% | 56.3% |
| Ottawa Veterans | 94.4% | 5.6% |
| Ottawa Nonveterans | 44.3% | 55.7% |
| Washtenaw Veterans | 93.8% | 6.2% |
| Washtenaw Nonveterans | 45.8% | 54.2% |
| MI Veterans | 94.8% | 5.2% |
| MI Nonveterans | 43.4% | 56.6% |

Source: U.S. Census Bureau. American Community Survey (2006-2010 Average).

Race & Ethnicity

Table 2 shows an underrepresentation of minorities across each county and the State. Kent County a very high percentage of Whites comprising Veterans and a low percentage of African Americans.

Table 2

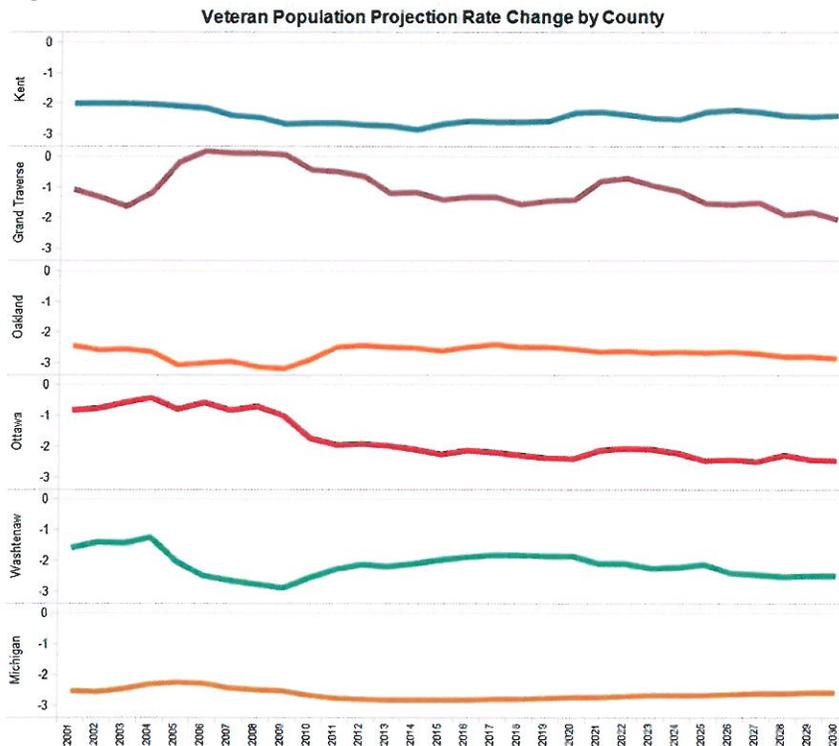
| | White | American Indian and Alaska Native | Asian | Black or African American | Hispanic or Latino (of any race) | Two or more races |
|----------------------------|--------|-----------------------------------|-------|---------------------------|----------------------------------|-------------------|
| Kent Veterans | 91.00% | 0.60% | 0.40% | 6.50% | 2.10% | 0.80% |
| Kent Nonveterans | 83.70% | 0.40% | 2.40% | 8.60% | 7.90% | 1.50% |
| Grand Traverse Veterans | 96.70% | 1.00% | 0.00% | 0.30% | 0.90% | 2.00% |
| Grand Traverse Nonveterans | 95.90% | 0.70% | 0.60% | 1.30% | 1.80% | 1.10% |
| Oakland Veterans | 86.10% | 0.30% | 0.70% | 11.60% | 1.60% | 0.90% |
| Oakland Nonveterans | 79.40% | 0.30% | 5.70% | 12.30% | 2.90% | 1.30% |
| Ottawa Veterans | 96.10% | 0.80% | 0.30% | 0.90% | 2.90% | 0.80% |
| Ottawa Nonveterans | 90.80% | 0.30% | 2.60% | 1.20% | 7.10% | 1.10% |
| Washtenaw Veterans | 86.10% | 0.40% | 0.50% | 11.40% | 2.00% | 1.20% |
| Washtenaw Nonveterans | 76.20% | 0.30% | 8.70% | 11.60% | 3.50% | 2.20% |

Source: U.S. Census Bureau. American Community Survey (2006-2010 Average).

Population Projections

The veteran population is projected to steadily decline over the next couple decades. Figure 2 illustrates Kent County is also projected to steadily decline, though not as much as Oakland (in both total number and rate).

Figure 2

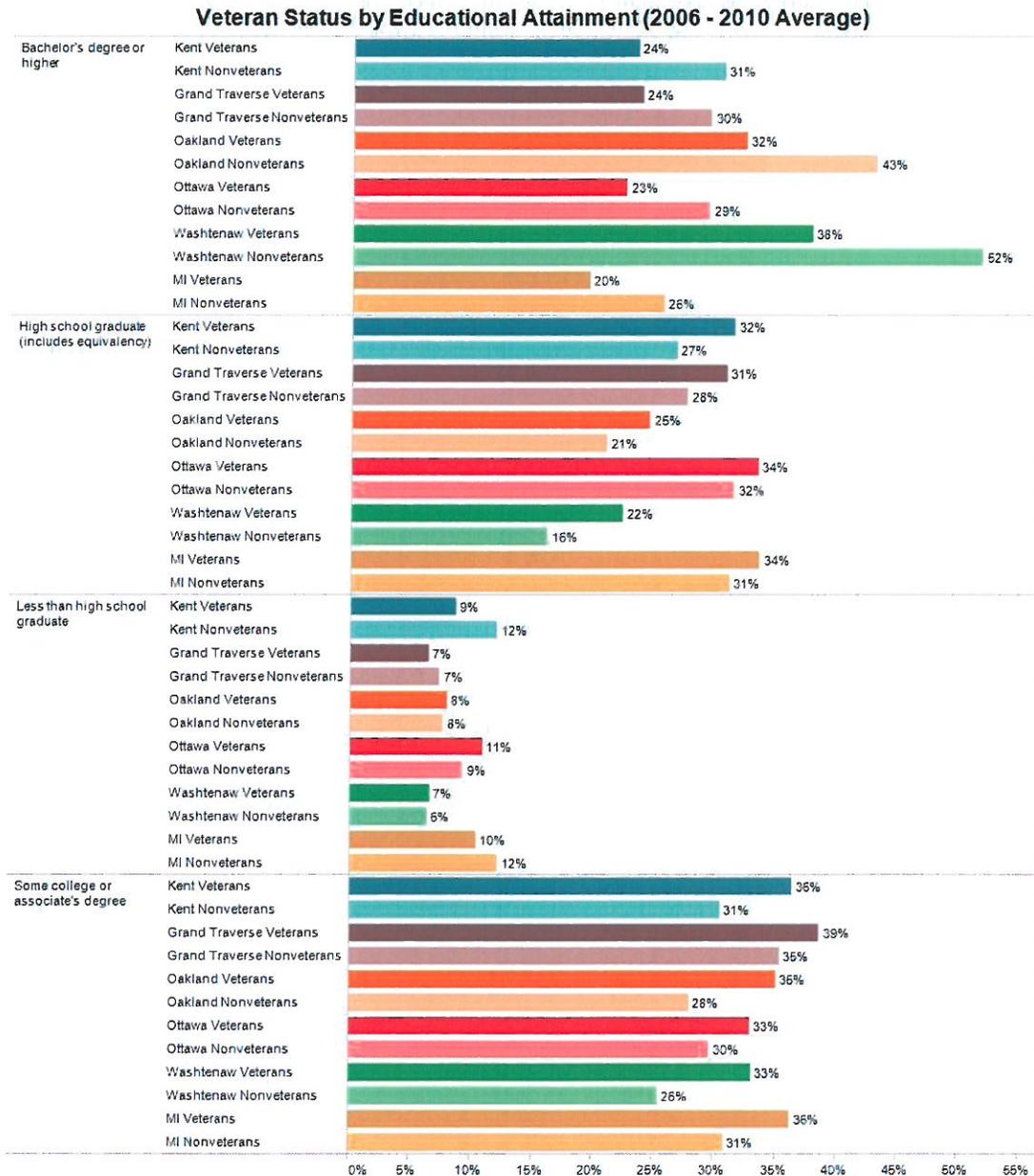


Source: U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs. 2007 Veteran Population Projections (2000-2030).

Educational Attainment

A higher percentage of veterans have some college experience. Figure 3 displays Kent County closely following the State distribution, especially with veterans with some college experience. Oakland and Washtenaw notably have higher percentages of veterans with at least a Bachelor's Degree.

Figure 3



Source: U.S. Census Bureau. American Community Survey (2006-2010 Average).

Homelessness

Point-in-time counts are not realistic estimates of the homeless population. Moreover, only considering the data from Continuum of Care entities is not going to provide anywhere near a comprehensive estimate. They can be useful when making comparisons among different areas, however. Table 3 allows for a comparison. Kent County has a significantly larger homeless population than our comparison areas although the 2010 count reported significantly less homeless persons than previous counts.

Table 3

| Continuum of Care Name | 2006 | 2007 | 2008 | 2009 | 2010 | % Change 06-10 | % of Statewide Sheltered Counts |
|---|------|------|------|------|------|----------------|---------------------------------|
| Grand Rapids/Wyoming/Kent County | 814 | 807 | 752 | 834 | 575 | -29.4% | 5.6% |
| Ann Arbor/Washtenaw County | 252 | 357 | 357 | 307 | 439 | 74.2% | 4.3% |
| Grand Traverse, Antrim, Leelanau Counties | 109 | 216 | 216 | 279 | 285 | 161.5% | 2.8% |
| Pontiac/Royal Oak/Oakland County | 598 | 402 | 402 | 381 | 451 | -24.6% | 4.4% |
| Holland/Ottawa County | - | 306 | 291 | 297 | 304 | -0.7% | 3.0% |

Source: U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development, 2010 Annual Homeless Assessment.

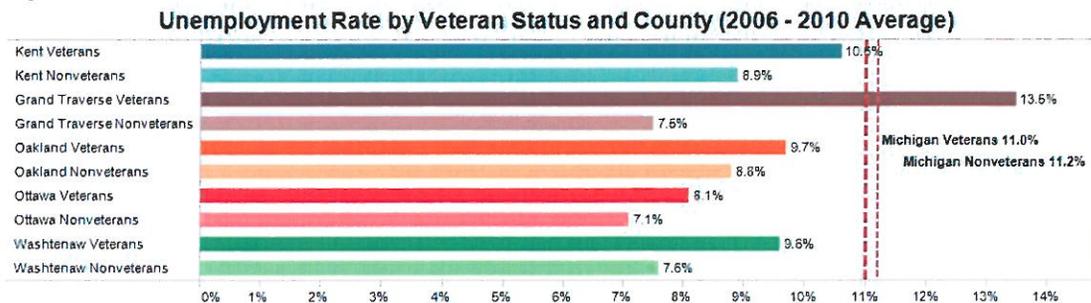
For a more accurate estimate of the homeless population in Kent County, 5,118 persons were tracked during 2009 by the Kent County Homeless Management Information System (HMIS). This estimate includes emergency shelters, transitional housing, missions, and permanent supportive housing. This estimate does represent a 15% decrease from the estimate in 2008 and so while it is not as extreme as the trend shown in Table 3, it does indicate a decreasing homeless population in Kent County. Given the lack of a standardized HMIS tracking in our other counties of interest, similar estimates for those areas are not provided.

Employment Status

Unemployment

Figure 4 illustrates a relatively high unemployment rate for veterans in Kent County as compared with Oakland and Washtenaw. Once again, Kent County closely follows the State. The overall rate of unemployment for Kent County in August of 2012 was 6.8% and reflects positive trends described in the overview and following this section. This rate is more favorable than that of Oakland (9.5%), similar to Grand Traverse (7.3%) and Ottawa (6.7%), but worse than Washtenaw (5.9%)

Figure 4

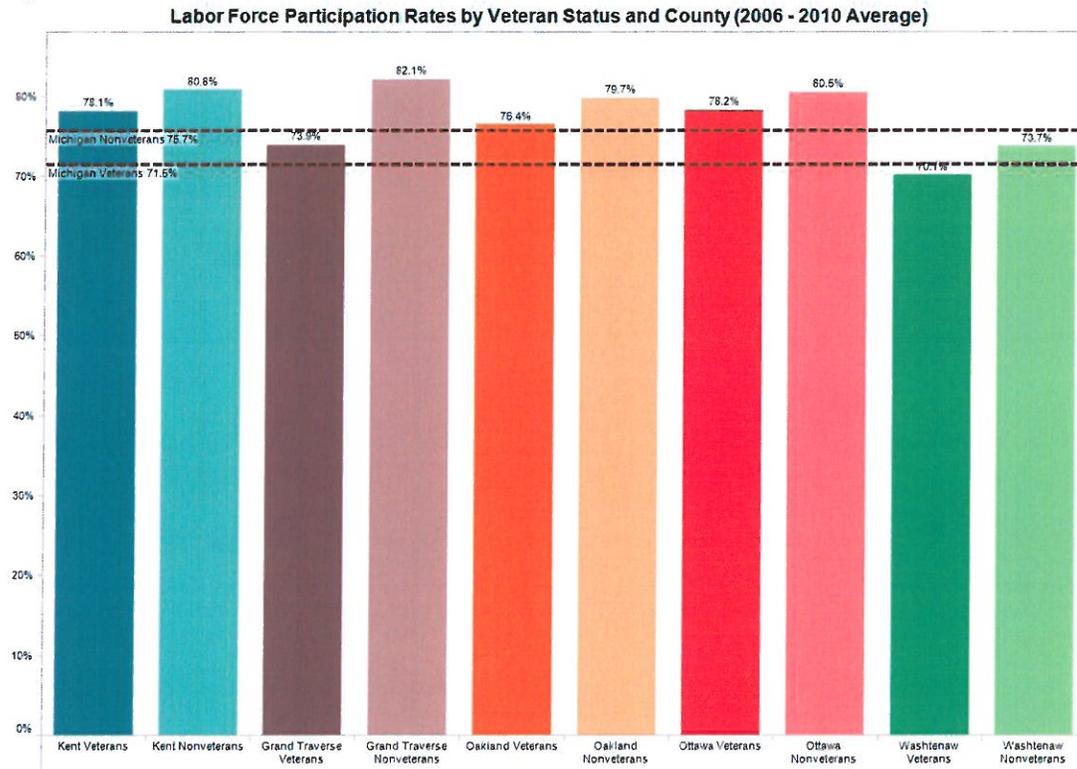


Source: U.S. Census Bureau. American Community Survey (2006-2010 Average).

Labor Force

Somewhat counterintuitive to the unemployment rate, Figure 5 shows that veterans in Kent County have a high labor force participation rate among the comparison counties and is notably higher than the State.

Figure 5



Source: U.S. Census Bureau. American Community Survey (2006-2010 Average).

Economic Health

Job Flows

Table 4 on the following page provides a detailed look at the economic activity of the counties of concern by displaying earnings, job creation, job flows, hires, separations, employment, and turnover. Net job flows give an overall sense of annual employment change. That change has been strong in 2010 and 2011, though job losses from the Great Recession and losses during the past decade should be kept in mind. The change from 2006 to 2011 demonstrates that while current growth is significant, it was not at the levels experienced in 2006 (just before the full extent of the Great Recession was felt). Kent County created many jobs in 2010 (22,186) but not as many in 2011 (17,968). This change was contrary to the other counties and State trends. Earnings in Kent County, especially of new hires, have grown faster than the comparison counties.

Table 4

| | 2006 | 2007 | 2008 | 2009 | 2010 | 2011 | % 06-11 |
|-----------------------|---------|---------|---------|---------|---------|---------|----------|
| Kent | | | | | | | |
| Avg Monthly Earnings | \$3,410 | \$3,502 | \$3,567 | \$3,553 | \$3,569 | \$3,682 | 8.0% |
| Avg New Hire Earnings | \$1,899 | \$1,882 | \$2,024 | \$1,998 | \$1,985 | \$2,134 | 12.4% |
| Job Creation | 20,662 | 20,787 | 20,366 | 18,575 | 22,186 | 17,968 | -13.0% |
| Net Job Flows | 448 | 3,846 | -1,521 | -1,775 | 6,531 | 4,441 | 891.4% |
| New Hires | 52,673 | 56,416 | 47,619 | 35,302 | 45,340 | 46,996 | -10.8% |
| Separations | 66,533 | 64,981 | 63,794 | 50,572 | 53,552 | 52,567 | -21.0% |
| Total Employment | 341,016 | 339,652 | 340,864 | 315,341 | 325,015 | 324,060 | -5.0% |
| Turnover | 9.9% | 9.4% | 9.3% | 8.5% | 9.3% | 8.7% | -11.3% |
| Grand Traverse | | | | | | | |
| Avg Monthly Earnings | \$3,037 | \$3,093 | \$3,184 | \$3,203 | \$3,283 | \$3,271 | 7.7% |
| Avg New Hire Earnings | \$1,695 | \$1,711 | \$1,833 | \$1,713 | \$1,806 | \$1,886 | 11.3% |
| Job Creation | 3,135 | 2,990 | 2,834 | 2,384 | 2,531 | 2,887 | -7.9% |
| Net Job Flows | 433 | 52 | -42 | -350 | 356 | 1,048 | 141.9% |
| New Hires | 7,554 | 7,009 | 6,305 | 4,778 | 5,041 | 5,675 | -24.9% |
| Separations | 9,157 | 8,857 | 8,209 | 6,993 | 6,565 | 6,825 | -25.5% |
| Total Employment | 47,999 | 46,712 | 46,982 | 44,440 | 43,508 | 44,772 | -6.7% |
| Turnover | 9.4% | 9.3% | 9.0% | 8.2% | 8.2% | 8.0% | -15.2% |
| Oakland | | | | | | | |
| Avg Monthly Earnings | \$4,273 | \$4,392 | \$4,450 | \$4,290 | \$4,425 | \$4,394 | 2.9% |
| Avg New Hire Earnings | \$2,516 | \$2,640 | \$2,637 | \$2,449 | \$2,608 | \$2,708 | 7.7% |
| Job Creation | 46,363 | 40,026 | 36,373 | 31,460 | 34,607 | 43,476 | -6.2% |
| Net Job Flows | 496 | 61 | -7,536 | -7,640 | 6,906 | 11,848 | 2,291.2% |
| New Hires | 109,153 | 108,140 | 92,211 | 69,335 | 81,459 | 92,021 | -15.7% |
| Separations | 139,451 | 131,312 | 124,818 | 100,506 | 95,883 | 103,452 | -25.8% |
| Total Employment | 724,847 | 722,556 | 710,858 | 647,352 | 635,035 | 653,852 | -9.8% |
| Turnover | 10.2% | 9.7% | 9.6% | 8.4% | 8.3% | 9.3% | -8.7% |
| Ottawa | | | | | | | |
| Avg Monthly Earnings | \$3,302 | \$3,353 | \$3,382 | \$3,305 | \$3,473 | \$3,430 | 3.9% |
| Avg New Hire Earnings | \$1,858 | \$1,903 | \$1,912 | \$1,906 | \$1,955 | \$2,044 | 10.0% |
| Job Creation | 6,744 | 6,213 | 5,226 | 5,669 | 6,343 | 6,974 | 3.4% |
| Net Job Flows | 233 | 227 | -1,624 | -908 | 1,676 | 2,648 | 1,036.5% |
| New Hires | 16,738 | 15,858 | 13,710 | 10,128 | 12,827 | 13,934 | -16.8% |
| Separations | 21,151 | 19,877 | 19,075 | 15,338 | 15,220 | 16,584 | -21.6% |
| Total Employment | 114,079 | 111,331 | 110,519 | 98,029 | 98,593 | 105,021 | -7.9% |
| Turnover | 8.9% | 8.4% | 8.1% | 7.5% | 7.9% | 8.0% | -9.9% |
| Washtenaw | | | | | | | |
| Avg Monthly Earnings | \$3,813 | \$3,958 | \$3,909 | \$3,894 | \$3,964 | \$3,949 | 3.6% |
| Avg New Hire Earnings | \$2,192 | \$2,193 | \$2,266 | \$2,184 | \$2,167 | \$2,294 | 4.7% |
| Job Creation | 10,730 | 8,748 | 8,245 | 6,535 | 7,561 | 8,388 | -21.8% |
| Net Job Flows | 156 | -139 | 649 | -934 | 1,001 | 1,774 | 1,035.6% |
| New Hires | 24,272 | 23,385 | 20,868 | 17,188 | 19,333 | 20,861 | -14.1% |
| Separations | 32,467 | 29,550 | 26,945 | 23,562 | 24,011 | 24,509 | -24.5% |
| Total Employment | 186,664 | 184,149 | 180,769 | 177,227 | 175,629 | 181,449 | -2.8% |
| Turnover | 9.8% | 9.2% | 8.4% | 7.3% | 7.7% | 7.9% | -19.5% |
| Statewide | | | | | | | |
| Avg Monthly Earnings | \$2,831 | \$2,916 | \$2,985 | \$2,933 | \$3,036 | \$3,054 | 7.9% |
| Avg New Hire Earnings | \$1,644 | \$1,705 | \$1,784 | \$1,696 | \$1,808 | \$1,892 | 15.1% |
| Job Creation | 3,164 | 2,802 | 2,584 | 2,411 | 2,571 | 2,851 | -9.9% |
| Net Job Flows | 69 | 28 | -378 | -335 | 409 | 802 | 1,062.4% |
| New Hires | 7,141 | 7,012 | 6,081 | 4,783 | 5,516 | 5,997 | -16.0% |
| Separations | 9,340 | 8,820 | 8,399 | 6,999 | 6,924 | 7,029 | -24.7% |
| Total Employment | 49,945 | 49,244 | 48,208 | 44,768 | 44,626 | 45,663 | -8.6% |
| Turnover | 10.0% | 9.8% | 9.6% | 8.9% | 9.1% | 8.9% | -11.4% |

Source: U.S. Census Bureau. Local Employment Dynamics. Quarterly Workforce Indicators (2006-2011).

Industry Employment

There has been relatively little difference between veterans and nonveterans with regards to industry employment distribution. A notable exception is a higher representation of veterans within the state and federal sectors – especially in protective services.⁵ Both Federal and State employment is steadily declining, as displayed in Table 5.

West Michigan is a leading export metropolis and manufacturing employment is on the rise. As a leader in Office Furniture production, it is significant that employment is forecasted for healthy increases in the short-term outlook (remainder of 2012 and into 2013) both nationally (The Business and Institutional Furniture Manufacturer's Association) and regionally (Michael A. Dunlap and Associates (MADA) Office Furniture Index).⁶ With the economy recovering in 2009, the manufacturing sector has grown and seen exceptional growth in subsectors over the past couple years such as Food, Wood Product, Plastics and Rubber Products, Fabricated Metal Product, and Machinery.⁷ Professional and Technical Services and Health Care and Social Assistance have experienced strong growth. West Michigan is unique for the reason that growth in young adults (25-34 years) with at least a Bachelor's degree remain very strong (as of 2010) despite slowed growth across country. The strength of the economy moving forward will partly reside on capitalizing on this human capital in these sectors.⁸

Table 5: Kent County Average Employment

| Sectors | 2006 | 2007 | 2008 | 2009 | 2010 | 2011 | % 06-11 |
|--|----------------|----------------|----------------|----------------|----------------|----------------|--------------|
| Agriculture, forestry, fishing and hunting | 1,715 | 1,751 | 1,498 | 1,657 | 1,582 | 1,688 | -1.6% |
| Mining | 123 | 129 | 132 | 101 | 128 | 118 | -4.1% |
| Utilities | 936 | 936 | 922 | 878 | 788 | 770 | -17.7% |
| Construction | 15,588 | 14,752 | 14,285 | 12,032 | 11,396 | 11,501 | -26.2% |
| Manufacturing | 64,457 | 62,672 | 59,977 | 50,402 | 51,190 | 54,282 | -15.8% |
| Wholesale trade | 19,637 | 19,883 | 19,773 | 18,182 | 18,287 | 18,749 | -4.5% |
| Retail trade | 35,323 | 34,459 | 33,169 | 31,584 | 31,345 | 31,293 | -11.4% |
| Transportation and warehousing | 8,034 | 8,501 | 8,231 | 7,726 | 7,633 | 7,852 | -2.3% |
| Information | 5,202 | 4,833 | 4,433 | 4,084 | 3,891 | 3,681 | -29.2% |
| Finance and insurance | 15,607 | 15,079 | 12,901 | 12,254 | 12,156 | 12,793 | -18.0% |
| Real estate and rental and leasing | 3,769 | 3,785 | 3,763 | 3,537 | 3,540 | 3,636 | -3.5% |
| Professional and technical services | 13,306 | 13,713 | 14,462 | 13,819 | 13,502 | 13,988 | 5.1% |
| Management of companies and enterprises | 5,818 | 4,426 | 4,402 | 4,322 | 4,484 | 4,559 | -21.6% |
| Administrative and waste services | 32,696 | 35,030 | 32,168 | 26,232 | 28,617 | 34,223 | 4.7% |
| Educational services | 8,942 | 9,732 | 10,085 | 8,986 | 8,639 | 8,592 | -3.9% |
| Health care and social assistance | 41,563 | 43,218 | 44,801 | 45,424 | 46,813 | 48,132 | 15.8% |
| Arts, entertainment, and recreation | 3,793 | 3,792 | 3,772 | 3,607 | 3,657 | 3,752 | -1.1% |
| Accommodation and food services | 25,254 | 24,882 | 24,376 | 23,574 | 24,263 | 24,524 | -2.9% |
| Other services, except public administration | 10,958 | 10,606 | 10,519 | 10,131 | 10,185 | 10,415 | -5.0% |
| Federal Government | 3,018 | 3,020 | 3,028 | 3,041 | 3,121 | 2,914 | -3.4% |
| State Government | 1,967 | 1,989 | 1,928 | 1,857 | 1,624 | 1,611 | -18.1% |
| Local Government | 21,838 | 21,134 | 21,082 | 20,986 | 20,332 | 19,909 | -8.8% |
| Total (All Private Industries) | 312,722 | 312,181 | 303,673 | 278,542 | 282,111 | 294,554 | -5.8% |

⁵ (Bureau of Labor Statistics, 2012)

⁶ (W.E. Upjohn Institute for Employment Research, 2012)

⁷ (Bureau of Labor Statistics, 2011)

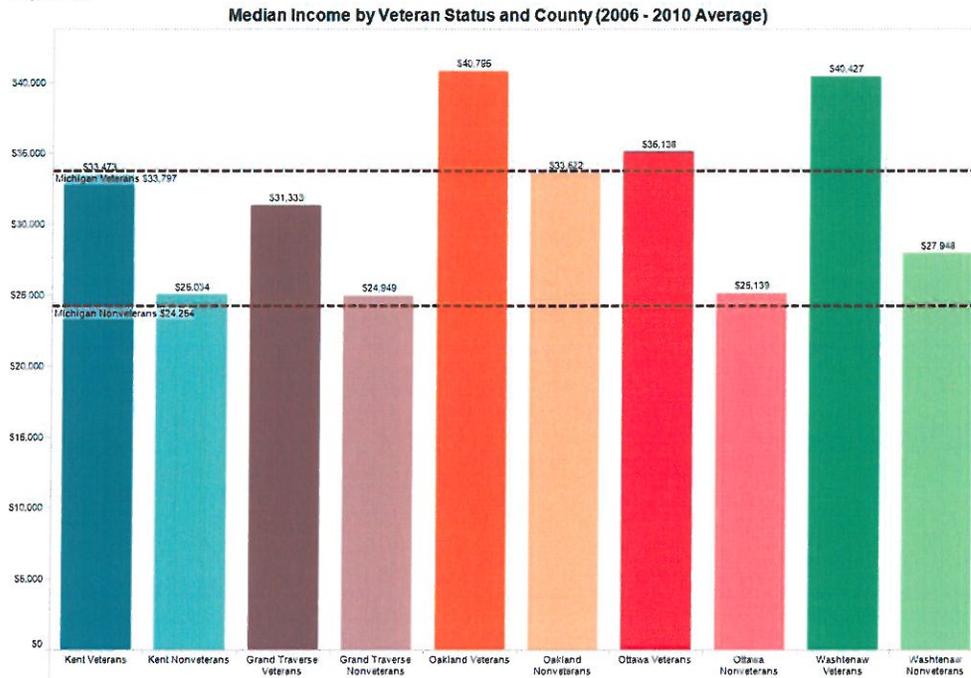
⁸ (Brookings Institute, 2012)

Source: Bureau of Labor Statistics. Quarterly Census of Employment and Wages (2005-2011).

Income

Figure 6 displays the median income by veteran status in the past 12 months (2010 inflation-adjusted dollars). Veterans in Kent have considerably less income than those in Oakland and Washtenaw but are almost exactly aligned with the State.

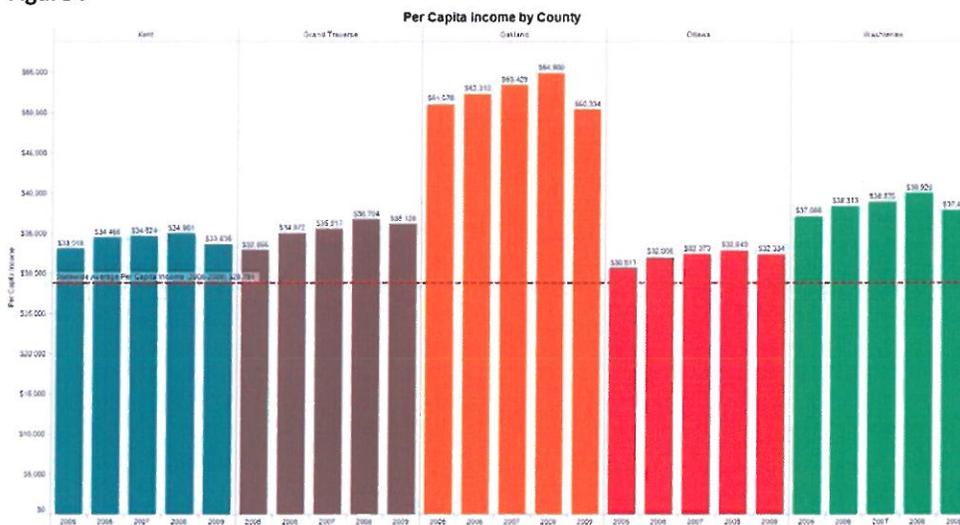
Figure 6



Source: U.S. Census Bureau. American Community Survey (2006-2010 Average).

Per capita income can demonstrate different wealth than median household income. Figure 7 shows Kent was above the statewide average for per capita income but well below that of Oakland and Washtenaw.

Figure 7



Source: U.S. Bureau of Economic Analysis (2005-2009).

Implications

The state of economic health in West Michigan has been presented using both veteran specific data and data for the general population with the understanding that veteran trends largely follow the general economic patterns. Demographics of veterans allow for a more nuanced lens to be applied when understanding the state of veterans regionally and how their situations compare to veterans in other regions in the State. The veteran population being served in Kent County is older, has more homeless persons, and has a relatively high unemployment rate compared to similar counties in Michigan.

Current employment trends – unemployment and labor force participation – and earning increases show positive signs for Kent County. The economic health of West Michigan is largely positive, though the job creation trend in Kent County from 2010 to 2011 was contrary to the State and stagnate growth in many industries nationally and for the State call for tempered expectations of robust growth. Kent County has fared well relative to the comparison counties in educational attainment, wage increases, and labor force participation. Unemployment, underemployment, and homelessness remain significant issues despite positive trends and impact the needs of veterans served by Kent County Veterans Affairs.



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cridata.org

ATTACHMENT K

MILLAGE SCENARIO 1: 5 Hundreths of One Mill

| | | | | | |
|--------|---|---------------|---|---|---|
| Step 1 | Enter Proposed Millage Rate: | 0.0500 | | | Each mill is the rate to raise \$1 per \$1,000 of Taxable Value |
| Step 2 | Convert rate to mills: | x .001 | | | Value |
| Step 3 | Mills expressed in decimal form for tax bills | 0.000050 | | | |
| | | | | | Tax Dollars Generated |
| Step 4 | 2013 Total Taxable Value | Millage Rate | X | = | 1,001,290 |
| | 20,025,808,959 | 0.000050 | | | |

| Individual Property Owner 1 | | |
|-----------------------------|----------------------|---------------|
| Enter True Cash Value | Assessed Value (50%) | Taxable Value |
| 200,000 | 100,000 | 100,000 |
| | Taxable Value: | 100,000 |
| | X Millage Rate | 0.000050 |
| | \$ Increase in Taxes | \$5.00 |

| Individual Property Owner 2 | | |
|-----------------------------|----------------------|---------------|
| Enter True Cash Value | Assessed Value (50%) | Taxable Value |
| 100,000 | 50,000 | 50,000 |
| | Taxable Value: | 50,000 |
| | X Millage Rate | 0.000050 |
| | \$ Increase in Taxes | \$2.50 |

| Scenario | 2013 Total Taxable Value | Millage Rate | | Tax Dollars Generated | Enter #Mills |
|----------|--------------------------|---------------|---|-----------------------|--------------|
| 1 | 20,025,808,959 | X 0.000500000 | = | 10,012,904 | 0.50000 |
| 2 | 20,025,808,959 | X 0.000400000 | = | 8,010,324 | 0.40000 |
| 3 | 20,025,808,959 | X 0.000300000 | = | 6,007,743 | 0.30000 |
| 4 | 20,025,808,959 | X 0.000200000 | = | 4,005,162 | 0.20000 |
| 5 | 20,025,808,959 | X 0.000100000 | = | 2,002,581 | 0.10000 |
| 6 | 20,025,808,959 | X 0.000050000 | = | 1,001,290 | 0.05000 |
| 7 | 20,025,808,959 | X 0.000040000 | = | 801,032 | 0.04000 |
| 8 | 20,025,808,959 | X 0.000030000 | = | 600,774 | 0.03000 |
| 9 | 20,025,808,959 | X 0.000025000 | = | 500,645 | 0.02500 |
| 10 | 20,025,808,959 | X 0.000012500 | = | 250,323 | 0.01250 |
| 11 | 20,025,808,959 | X 0.000006000 | = | 120,155 | 0.00600 |
| 12 | 20,025,808,959 | X 0.000003000 | = | 60,077 | 0.00300 |
| 13 | 20,025,808,959 | X 0.000001500 | = | 30,039 | 0.00150 |

MILLAGE SCENARIO 2: 2.5 Hundreths of One Mill

| | | | | | |
|--------|---|---------------|---|---|---|
| Step 1 | Enter Proposed Millage Rate: | 0.0250 | | | Each mill is the rate to raise \$1 per \$1,000 of Taxable Value |
| Step 2 | Convert rate to mills: | x .001 | | | Value |
| Step 3 | Mills expressed in decimal form for tax bills | 0.000025 | | | |
| | | | | | Tax Dollars Generated |
| Step 4 | 2013 Total Taxable Value | Millage Rate | X | = | 500,645 |
| | 20,025,808,959 | 0.000025 | | | |

| Individual Property Owner 1 | | |
|-----------------------------|----------------------|---------------|
| Enter True Cash Value | Assessed Value (50%) | Taxable Value |
| 200,000 | 100,000 | 100,000 |
| | Taxable Value: | 100,000 |
| | X Millage Rate | 0.000025 |
| | \$ Increase in Taxes | \$2.50 |

| Individual Property Owner 2 | | |
|-----------------------------|----------------------|---------------|
| Enter True Cash Value | Assessed Value (50%) | Taxable Value |
| 100,000 | 50,000 | 50,000 |
| | Taxable Value: | 50,000 |
| | X Millage Rate | 0.000025 |
| | \$ Increase in Taxes | \$1.25 |

| Scenario | 2013 Total Taxable Value | Millage Rate | | Tax Dollars Generated | Enter #Mills |
|----------|--------------------------|---------------|---|-----------------------|--------------|
| 1 | 20,025,808,959 | X 0.000500000 | = | 10,012,904 | 0.50000 |
| 2 | 20,025,808,959 | X 0.000400000 | = | 8,010,324 | 0.40000 |
| 3 | 20,025,808,959 | X 0.000300000 | = | 6,007,743 | 0.30000 |
| 4 | 20,025,808,959 | X 0.000200000 | = | 4,005,162 | 0.20000 |
| 5 | 20,025,808,959 | X 0.000100000 | = | 2,002,581 | 0.10000 |
| 6 | 20,025,808,959 | X 0.000050000 | = | 1,001,290 | 0.05000 |
| 7 | 20,025,808,959 | X 0.000040000 | = | 801,032 | 0.04000 |
| 8 | 20,025,808,959 | X 0.000030000 | = | 600,774 | 0.03000 |
| 9 | 20,025,808,959 | X 0.000025000 | = | 500,645 | 0.02500 |
| 10 | 20,025,808,959 | X 0.000012500 | = | 250,323 | 0.01250 |
| 11 | 20,025,808,959 | X 0.000006000 | = | 120,155 | 0.00600 |
| 12 | 20,025,808,959 | X 0.000003000 | = | 60,077 | 0.00300 |
| 13 | 20,025,808,959 | X 0.000001500 | = | 30,039 | 0.00150 |

Enter proposed millage

| True Cash Value | Assessed Value (50%) | Taxable Value | X Millage Rate |
|-----------------|----------------------|---------------|----------------|
| 300,000 | 150,000 | 150,000 | 0.000025 |
| 275,000 | 137,500 | 137,500 | 0.000025 |
| 250,000 | 125,000 | 125,000 | 0.000025 |
| 225,000 | 112,500 | 112,500 | 0.000025 |
| 200,000 | 100,000 | 100,000 | 0.000025 |
| 175,000 | 87,500 | 87,500 | 0.000025 |
| 150,000 | 75,000 | 75,000 | 0.000025 |
| 100,000 | 50,000 | 50,000 | 0.000025 |
| 75,000 | 37,500 | 37,500 | 0.000025 |
| 65,000 | 32,500 | 32,500 | 0.000025 |
| 50,000 | 25,000 | 25,000 | 0.000025 |

Annual Tax

\$3.75

\$3.44

\$3.13

\$2.81

\$2.50

\$2.19

\$1.88

\$1.25

\$0.94

\$0.81

\$0.63