



WISCONSIN STATE REPRESENTATIVE

Dianne Hesselbein

79TH ASSEMBLY DISTRICT

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OKLAHOMA RECOGNIZES SERVICE-CONNECTED STRESS DISORDER AS MITIGATING FACTOR IN CRIMINAL SENTENCING OF VETS;

REP. HESSELBEIN PRAISES GOVERNOR, SPONSOR

Oklahoma Gov. Mary Fallin signed legislation into law today that allows criminal courts to use service-connected PTSD as a mitigating factor in sentencing military veterans.

“I commend Governor Fallin for her support of this important legislation, and also applaud Rep. Richard Morrisette, the lead sponsor, for his hard work,” said Rep. Dianne Hesselbein (D-Middleton).”

Hesselbein is the ranking member of the Wisconsin Assembly Committee on Veterans and Military Affairs. She added, “Oklahoma’s achievement encourages us to revive our effort in Wisconsin, which received bipartisan votes the last time.”

Rep. Morrisette, an attorney practicing in Oklahoma City, is a Democrat. Governor Fallin is a Republican. The law gives judges legal footing to use a medical diagnosis for service-connected Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD) as a mitigating factor in the sentencing of veterans convicted of criminal charges.

Morrisette said: “This legislation is neither Democratic nor Republican, just something positive for veterans. We train men and women to defend our nation in combat and then we expect, upon their return to civilian life, the trauma experienced by these individuals to be erased from their psyche. That is an unreasonable and unfair expectation.”

In the last session of the Wisconsin legislature, Hesselbein led bipartisan sponsors in an effort to pass AB180, Wisconsin’s version of the PTSD bill. It was approved in the Assembly but failed in the Senate.

Morrisette invited Hesselbein to witness today’s bill signing.

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