**South Carolina General Assembly**

120th Session, 2013-2014

**A280, R316, H3014**

**STATUS INFORMATION**

General Bill

Sponsors: Reps. J.E. Smith, Bernstein, M.S. McLeod, McEachern, Weeks, Hart and Gilliard

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Introduced in the House on January 8, 2013

Introduced in the Senate on April 23, 2013

Last Amended on May 21, 2014

Passed by the General Assembly on June 5, 2014

Governor's Action: June 10, 2014, Signed

Summary: Veterans Treatment Court Program Act

**HISTORY OF LEGISLATIVE ACTIONS**

Date Body Action Description with journal page number

12/11/2012 House Prefiled

12/11/2012 House Referred to Committee on **Judiciary**

1/8/2013 House Introduced and read first time ([House Journal‑page 44](file:///H:\HJ%20Archive\2013\01-08-13.docx))

1/8/2013 House Referred to Committee on **Judiciary** ([House Journal‑page 44](file:///H:\HJ%20Archive\2013\01-08-13.docx))

1/10/2013 House Member(s) request name added as sponsor: M.S.McLeod

4/10/2013 House Member(s) request name added as sponsor: McEachern, Weeks

4/10/2013 House Committee report: Favorable with amendment **Judiciary** ([House Journal‑page 34](file:///H:\HJ%20Archive\2013\04-10-13.docx))

4/17/2013 House Member(s) request name added as sponsor: Hart, Gilliard

4/17/2013 House Amended ([House Journal‑page 33](file:///H:\HJ%20Archive\2013\04-17-13.docx))

4/17/2013 House Read second time ([House Journal‑page 33](file:///H:\HJ%20Archive\2013\04-17-13.docx))

4/17/2013 House Roll call Yeas‑114 Nays‑0 ([House Journal‑page 41](file:///H:\HJ%20Archive\2013\04-17-13.docx))

4/18/2013 House Read third time and sent to Senate ([House Journal‑page 45](file:///H:\HJ%20Archive\2013\04-18-13.docx))

4/23/2013 Senate Introduced and read first time ([Senate Journal‑page 9](file:///H:\SJ%20Archive\2013\04-23-13.docx))

4/23/2013 Senate Referred to Committee on **Judiciary** ([Senate Journal‑page 9](file:///H:\SJ%20Archive\2013\04-23-13.docx))

4/25/2013 Senate Referred to Subcommittee: Massey (ch), Bennett, McElveen

5/29/2013 Senate Committee report: Favorable with amendment **Judiciary** ([Senate Journal‑page 20](file:///H:\SJ%20Archive\2013\05-29-13.docx))

6/5/2013 Senate Committee Amendment Amended and Adopted ([Senate Journal‑page 45](file:///H:\SJ%20Archive\2013\06-05-13.docx))

5/21/2014 Senate Amended ([Senate Journal‑page 68](file:///H:\SJ%20Archive\2014\05-21-14.docx))

5/22/2014 Scrivener's error corrected

6/4/2014 Senate Read second time ([Senate Journal‑page 69](file:///H:\SJ%20Archive\2014\06-04-14.docx))

6/4/2014 Senate Roll call Ayes‑41 Nays‑0 ([Senate Journal‑page 69](file:///H:\SJ%20Archive\2014\06-04-14.docx))

6/5/2014 Senate Read third time and returned to House with amendments ([Senate Journal‑page 8](file:///H:\SJ%20Archive\2014\06-05-14.docx))

6/5/2014 Senate Roll call Ayes‑41 Nays‑0 ([Senate Journal‑page 8](file:///H:\SJ%20Archive\2014\06-05-14.docx))

6/5/2014 House Concurred in Senate amendment and enrolled ([House Journal‑page 85](file:///H:\HJ%20Archive\2014\06-05-14.docx))

6/5/2014 House Roll call Yeas‑99 Nays‑0

6/9/2014 Ratified R 316

6/10/2014 Signed By Governor

6/17/2014 Effective date 06/10/14

6/26/2014 Act No. 280

**VERSIONS OF THIS BILL**

[12/11/2012](file:///p:\pprever\2013-14\3014_20121211.docx)

[4/10/2013](file:///p:\pprever\2013-14\3014_20130410.docx)

[4/17/2013](file:///p:\pprever\2013-14\3014_20130417.docx)

[5/29/2013](file:///p:\pprever\2013-14\3014_20130529.docx)

[6/5/2013](file:///p:\pprever\2013-14\3014_20130605.docx)

[5/21/2014](file:///p:\pprever\2013-14\3014_20140521.docx)

[5/22/2014](file:///p:\pprever\2013-14\3014_20140522.docx)

(A280, R316, H3014)

**AN ACT TO AMEND THE CODE OF LAWS OF SOUTH CAROLINA, 1976, BY ADDING CHAPTER 29 TO TITLE 14 SO AS TO ENACT THE “VETERANS TREATMENT COURT PROGRAM ACT”; TO AUTHORIZE CIRCUIT SOLICITORS TO ESTABLISH VETERANS TREATMENT COURT PROGRAMS; TO PROVIDE THAT EACH CIRCUIT SOLICITOR THAT ACCEPTS STATE FUNDING FOR THE IMPLEMENTATION OF A VETERANS TREATMENT COURT PROGRAM MUST ESTABLISH AND ADMINISTER AT LEAST ONE VETERANS TREATMENT COURT PROGRAM FOR THE CIRCUIT WITHIN ONE HUNDRED EIGHTY DAYS OF RECEIPT OF FUNDING; AND TO PROVIDE THAT THE CIRCUIT SOLICITOR MUST ADMINISTER THE PROGRAM AND ENSURE THAT ALL ELIGIBLE PERSONS ARE PERMITTED TO APPLY FOR ADMISSION.**

Whereas, researchers have shown that a significant number of members of the United States Armed Forces who have served in Iraq and Afghanistan will suffer, as a result of their military service, mental health injuries, such as post‑traumatic stress disorder, depression, anxiety and acute stress, and injuries that affect brain function, such as traumatic brain injury; and

Whereas, while the vast majority of returning members of the United States Armed Forces do not have contact with the criminal justice system, and most veterans and members of the United States Armed Forces are well‑adjusted, contributing members of society, psychiatrists and law enforcement officials agree that combat‑related injuries have led to instances of criminality; and

Whereas, as a grateful State, we must continue to honor the military service of our men and women by providing them with an alternative to incarceration when feasible, permitting them instead to obtain proper treatment for mental health and substance abuse problems that have resulted from military service. Now, therefore,

Be it enacted by the General Assembly of the State of South Carolina:

**Veterans Treatment Courts**

SECTION 1. Title 14 of the 1976 Code is amended by adding:

“CHAPTER 29

Veterans Treatment Court Program

Section 14‑29‑10. This chapter may be cited as the ‘Veterans Treatment Court Program Act’.

Section 14‑29‑20. The General Assembly recognizes the success of various other states’ veterans court initiatives in rehabilitating certain nonviolent offenders who are veterans of a military conflict in which the United States military is or has been involved. The purpose of this chapter is to divert qualifying nonviolent military veteran offenders away from the criminal justice system and into appropriate treatment programs, thereby reserving prison space for violent criminals and others for whom incarceration is the only reasonable alternative.

Section 14‑29‑30. Each circuit solicitor may establish a veterans treatment court program. Each circuit solicitor that accepts state funding for the implementation of a veterans treatment court program must establish and administer at least one veterans treatment court program for the circuit within one hundred eighty days of receipt of funding. The circuit solicitor must administer the program and ensure that all eligible persons are permitted to apply for admission to the program.”

**Savings Clause**

SECTION 2. The repeal or amendment by this act of any law, whether temporary or permanent or civil or criminal, does not affect pending actions, rights, duties, or liabilities founded thereon, or alter, discharge, release or extinguish any penalty, forfeiture, or liability incurred under the repealed or amended law, unless the repealed or amended provision shall so expressly provide. After the effective date of this act, all laws repealed or amended by this act must be taken and treated as remaining in full force and effect for the purpose of sustaining any pending or vested right, civil action, special proceeding, criminal prosecution, or appeal existing as of the effective date of this act, and for the enforcement of rights, duties, penalties, forfeitures, and liabilities as they stood under the repealed or amended laws.

**Severability**

SECTION 3. If any section, subsection, paragraph, subparagraph, sentence, clause, phrase, or word of this act is for any reason held to be unconstitutional or invalid, such holding shall not affect the constitutionality or validity of the remaining portions of this act, the General Assembly hereby declaring that it would have passed this act, and each and every section, subsection, paragraph, subparagraph, sentence, clause, phrase, and word thereof, irrespective of the fact that any one or more other sections, subsections, paragraphs, subparagraphs, sentences, clauses, phrases, or words hereof may be declared to be unconstitutional, invalid, or otherwise ineffective.

**Time effective**

SECTION 4. This act takes effect upon approval by the Governor.

Ratified the 9th day of June, 2014.

Approved the 10th day of June, 2014.

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