

COMMONWEALTH OF PENNSYLVANIA



STATE CIVIL SERVICE COMMISSION

Testimony of
Scott A. Rainey, Chairman
Pennsylvania State Civil Service Commission
before the
Senate Veterans Affairs & Emergency Preparedness Committee

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1:30 PM

Room 8EA

Chairman Vulakovich, Chairman Costa, members of the committee, thank you for the opportunity to appear before you today to discuss the legislative mission of the State Civil Service Commission (Commission) and its role in the employment of veterans.

My name is Scott A. Rainey and I currently serve as Chairman of the Commission. I was nominated by former Governor Tom Corbett and confirmed to the position by the Pennsylvania Senate in 2013. Due to the provisions of Act 72 of 2011, I am honored to serve as the Commonwealth's statutorily required veteran member of the Commission. With me today are Jeffrey T. Wallace – Commission Executive Director and Jack McGettigan – Commission Legislative and Press Liaison.

The merit service was created by legislation to enhance the efficiency and economy of government by attracting qualified employees and by hiring, retaining and promoting them based on their ability to do the job. The Civil Service Act further established the Commission as the administrator of the state's merit service.

Today, the Commission has three main offices – Harrisburg, Philadelphia and Pittsburgh and four regional test centers – Erie, Johnstown, Lock Haven and Scranton – with a staffing complement of 108 positions serving in a number of bureaus and divisions who carry out a broad range of responsibilities in order to efficiently recruit, promote, examine and refer qualified jobseekers for employment to state and local government covered agencies.

As a statutorily independent state agency, the Commission's role in administering the Commonwealth's merit service is to provide a centralized employment system that promotes economies of scale and cost efficiencies to recruit qualified jobseekers to Commonwealth and local government service. Of the more than 74,000 employees

under the Governor's jurisdiction and independent Boards and Commissions, approximately 55,000 (70%) throughout 38 state agencies are covered by the merit service.

In addition, approximately 4,000 employees work in merit service jobs with more than 300 county and local government agencies that contract with the Commission for its services. Local government agencies and programs include children and youth, mental health/mental retardation, most public housing authorities, drug and alcohol services and area agencies on aging.

Merit service jobs can be found in almost every field of work, at levels ranging from highly skilled, professional or very technical to entry-level jobs. The Commission routinely provides employment information to jobseekers, sends employment lists of qualified jobseekers to agencies seeking to fill jobs and monitors the appointment and promotion of merit service employees.

In addition, the Commission holds hearings on appeals from employment related disciplinary actions and from jobseekers and merit service employees who feel they have been discriminated against. The Commission also conducts investigations into allegations that the provisions of the Civil Service Act have been violated, including alleged violations of the political activity restrictions imposed on merit service employees. The Commission is also responsible for applying and enforcing the provisions of the Military Affairs Act (Act 92 of 1975, as amended; 51 Pa. C.S. subsection 7101 et seq.) as they relate to the merit employment service, also known as veterans' preference.

The Commission has an active recruitment program designed to promote state and local government merit service job opportunities to Pennsylvania veterans. During Fiscal Year 2013-14, the Commission attended and/or coordinated eighteen (18) statewide recruitment events specifically targeted to veterans. These events directly reached in excess of 3,000 veterans. The Commission also is involved with a number of statewide organizations that service veterans to include PA Cares, PA Veterans Chamber of Commerce, PA National Guard Employment Network, the U.S. Chamber – Hiring our Heroes, the U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs' Vocational Rehabilitation and Education Program, the Employer Partnership of the Armed Forces, and the Office of the Secretary of Defense for Reserve Affairs' Hero 2 Hired Program. Additionally, the Commission is an active member of the Governor's Advisory Council on Veterans Services created by Executive Order 2013-03 signed by former Governor Tom Corbett. I am pleased to report that due to these and other general recruitment efforts, 19% of all new merit system hires during calendar year 2014 were veterans.

Thank you for the opportunity to address the Committee today and allowing me this opportunity to discuss the role, mission and responsibilities of the Commission.

I am happy to answer any of your questions.