

DEPARTMENT OF MILITARY AFFAIRS

MINNESOTA ARMY AND AIR NATIONAL GUARD



OFFICE OF THE ADJUTANT GENERAL

VETERANS SERVICE BUILDING

STATE OF MINNESOTA

20 WEST 12TH STREET

ST. PAUL, MINNESOTA 55155-2098

January 28, 2020

The Adjutant General

Honorable Julie Rosen
Senate Finance Committee
2113 Minnesota Senate Building

Honorable Lyndon Carlson, Sr
House Ways and Means Committee
479 State Office Building

Honorable Richard Cohen
Senate Finance Committee
2301 Minnesota Senate Building

Honorable Pat Garofalo
House Ways and Means Committee
295 State Office Building

Honorable Bruce Anderson
Senate Veterans and Military Affairs
Committee
3209 Minnesota Senate Building

Honorable Rob Ecklund
House Veterans and Military Affairs
Division
409 State Office Building

Honorable Jerry Newton
Senate Veterans and Military Affairs
Committee
2411 Minnesota Senate Building

Honorable Bob Dettmer
House Veterans and Military Affairs
Division
289 State Office Building

Re: Annual Report on Support Our Troops (SOT) Account Grants

1. This annual report is submitted to the chairs and ranking minority members of the legislative committees and divisions with jurisdiction over military and veterans' affairs pursuant to Minnesota Statute 190.19, Subdivision 3.
2. The statute authorizes the use of SOT funds for four purposes:
 - (a.) Grants directly to eligible individuals.
 - (b.) Grants to one or more eligible foundations for the purpose of making grants to eligible individuals.
 - (c.) Veterans' services.
 - (d.) Grants to family readiness groups chartered by the Adjutant General.
3. No grants were made in 2019 pursuant to purpose 2.(a.) above.
4. The Adjutant General entered into a no-fee grant agreement with the Minnesota Military Family Foundation (MMFF) to administer funds pursuant to purpose 2.(b.) above.
 - (a.) The MMFF provided 126 grants in 2019. Of these, 121 met the requirements of the statute and the grant agreement.
 - (b.) The total disbursed for these 121 grants was \$400,865.21 but after applying the statutory cap, \$336,178.12 in Support Our Troops money was distributed. The remainder was paid using funds from private donations to MMFF.

(c.) Each request for assistance was validated by the Minnesota National Guard Family Assistance Centers and was approved by board action at the MMFF. Requests generally are directed to the foundation once local mechanisms have been exhausted. The 2017 revision to statute allowing for up to \$4,000 to any currently serving service member has resulted in the needs of our service members and their families being more fully met.

(d.) Many of the individual requests covered multiple needs. The grants were used for such emergency purposes as:

Mortgage/Rent (~\$176,000); Emergency Home/Appliance repair/replacement (~\$27,000); Utilities (~\$30,000); Auto loans/repairs (~\$48,000.00); Medical/Dental (~\$13,000); Daycare/Child Support (~\$7,000); Insurance (~\$10,000); plus miscellaneous other expenses (~\$25,000).

(e.) For comparison, 117 grants totaling \$346,440.15 were made in 2018, 57 grants totaling \$147,970.19 were made in 2017, 58 grants totaling \$109,863 were made in 2016, 34 grants totaling \$62,173.00 were made in 2015. 52 grants totaling \$95,627.000 were made in 2014. In 2013, 65 grants totaling \$119,942.00 were made. 82 grants were made in 2012 totaling \$149,043.00. In 2011, 75 grants were made totaling \$127,577.00. In 2010, 54 grants were made totaling \$90,286.00.

5. Pursuant to purpose 2.(c.) above:

(a.) Funds totaling \$413,740.80 were expended for wages, fringe, and miscellaneous costs for five personnel: two licensed alcohol and drug counselors to meet a critical need for these services for service members and their families that is otherwise unsupported; and three Beyond the Yellow Ribbon Regional Coordinators to sustain the Beyond the Yellow Ribbon Networks statewide.

(b.) A grant in the amount of \$30,956.50 was disbursed to Minnesota Assistance Council for Veterans to support direct services to veterans.

(c.) A grant in the amount of \$58,800.00 was provided to the Minnesota Air National Guard Historical Foundation to support the cataloguing and preservation of historical artifacts to preserve the legacy of Minnesota veterans of the Air National Guard.

(d.) \$4,406.32 was dispersed for marketing the Support Our Troops License Plates to sustain public interest in the program.

6. Sixteen grants of \$1,000.00 each were made pursuant to purpose 2.(d.) above.

7. The point of contact for this report is the Executive Director of the Department of Military Affairs, Don Kerr at donald.j.kerr2.nfg@mail.mil or (651) 268-8913.

Sincerely,



Jon A. Jensen
Major General, Minnesota Army
National Guard
Adjutant General