

State plan is aimed at helping Alabama veterans

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MONTGOMERY | State officials have a new plan they say will improve and coordinate services for Alabama veterans and their families.

A state commission appointed by Gov. Robert Bentley on Friday released details of the effort.

Among the goals: To reduce unemployment and homelessness among veterans; improve access to health care and help veterans with legal problems.

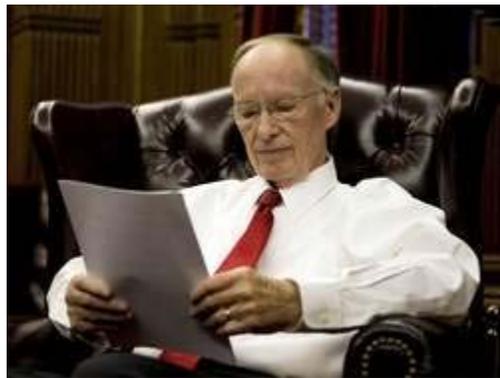
Bentley appointed the Alabama Veterans Executive Network Commission in December 2013, Al.com reported.

A main goal was to help Alabama residents who have served during the more than 10 years of wars in Afghanistan and Iraq and who have physical or psychological problems as a result.

Post-traumatic stress disorder is one of the main problems facing Alabama veterans, the governor said.

"We want to do everything that we can for our veterans," Bentley said. "That includes finding them a job. If they're homeless, finding them a place to live. If they have medical problems, making sure that they get quality health care."

Bentley appointed Major Gen. Larry Ross, who is retired from the Georgia National Guard, as the coordinator to implement the plan. It draws from ideas from the commission, which was led by Veterans Affairs Commissioner and retired Rear



AP

Alabama Gov. Robert Bentley studies the State of the State Address in his office at the State Capitol in Montgomery, Ala., Monday, Jan. 13, 2014 (AP Photo/Alabama Governor's Office, Jamie Martin)

Admiral Clyde Marsh and Alabama Mental Health Commissioner Jim Reddoch.

Veterans "have paid the price," Reddoch said.

"They are entitled to whatever we can do to meet their needs," he said.

Ross said there's a "sea of goodwill" among people to help veterans, and the plan will help put that into action. He said the initiative would not be a "flash in the pan."

There's a "sea of goodwill" among people to help veterans, said Ross, who added that the plan would help put that into action.

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