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SDDVA Secretary Whitlock's March Column – South Dakota Offers Veterans Great Opportunities

Recently Smart Asset™ named South Dakota as the top state for veterans in the nation. Much of this decision focused on veteran population, low unemployment rates, low housing costs, and access to healthcare facilities.

This recognition is great news, but it is not new to us! South Dakota has two remarkable VA Healthcare systems, nine Community Based Outpatient Clinics (CBOC) and hundreds of healthcare facilities who partner with the VA to provide care in the community.

South Dakota is a safe place to live and raise a family. We have no state income tax and we offer property tax exemptions for veterans with disabilities.

South Dakota awards a bonus for those who meet certain qualifications for active duty service.

For veterans wishing to grow their educational footprint, South Dakota exempts 12-month residency requirements, veterans can receive credit for military training when obtaining licenses, and there is no time limit on when veterans have to use tuition benefits at South Dakota colleges and universities. Veterans also have the option to participate in apprenticeship programs and on-the-job-training programs.

South Dakota has federally accredited and state certified veterans service officers and county and tribal veterans service officers who are subject matter experts in federal VA law and provide claims and counseling advocacy for veterans and their families.

It is no surprise to us that South Dakota ranks as the best state for veterans to live and work. We are extremely proud of all who have honorably served our country over the centuries. Providing quality and effective service to veterans and their dependents is, and always will be, our number one mission. We draw on the rich history of American veterans and their unique contributions to our nation for inspiration and direction.

Greg Whitlock, Secretary
South Dakota Department of Veterans Affairs