

Act Number: 09-010

Bill Number: 6406

Senate Pages: 1261-1262, 1479-1481 **5**

House Pages: 1603, 1849-1852 **5**

Committee: Veterans: 195-196, 212-213,
221, 222, 227 **7**

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Thank you, Mr. President. Calendar 452, PR.

Calendar 453, PR.

Calendar 454, House Bill Number 6235, Mr.

President, I move to refer this item to the Committee on Public Safety and Security.

THE CHAIR:

Without objection, so ordered.

SENATOR LOONEY:

Thank you, Mr. President. Calendar 455, PR.

Calendar 456, PR.

Calendar 457, PR.

Calendar 458, PR.

Moving to calendar page 30, Calendar 459, House Bill Number 5138, Mr. President, I move to place this item on the Consent Calendar.

THE CHAIR:

There is a motion on consent. Without objection, so ordered.

SENATOR LOONEY:

Thank you, Mr. President. Calendar 460 is PR.

Calendar 461, House Bill Number 6406, Mr.

President, I move to place this item on the Consent Calendar.

THE CHAIR:

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Motion is on consent. Without objection, so
ordered.

SENATOR LOONEY:

Thank you, Mr. President. Calendar 462, House
Bill Number 6537, I move to place this item on the
Consent Calendar.

THE CHAIR:

Motion is on consent. Without objection, so
ordered.

SENATOR LOONEY:

Thank you, Mr. President. Calendar 463 is marked
PR.

Calendar 464 is marked go.

Calendar 465, PR.

Calendar 466 is Senate Bill Number 1028, Mr.
President, I move to place this item on the Consent
Calendar.

THE CHAIR:

The motion is on consent. Without objection, so
ordered, sir.

SENATOR LOONEY:

Thank you, Mr. President. Calendar 467 is PR.

Calendar 468, PR.

Calendar 469, PR.

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Agenda Number 3, Emergency Certified Bill 6716 and
House Bill -- correction, 6379.

Turning to the calendar, calendar page 2,
Calendar Number 475, Senate Resolution Number 19;
Calendar 476, Senate Resolution Number 20; Calendar
477, Senate Joint Resolution Number 74.

Calendar page 4, Calendar Number 139, Senate Bill
854.

Calendar page 6, Calendar 178, Senate Bill 873.

Calendar page 7, Calendar 194, Substitute for
Senate Bill 756.

Calendar page 8, Calendar 223, Substitute for
Senate Bill 46.

Calendar page 10, Calendar Number 240, House Bill
Number 6401.

Calendar page 12, Calendar Number 264, Substitute
for Senate Bill 1023.

Calendar page 14, Calendar 328, Substitute for
Senate Bill 814.

Calendar page 19, Calendar Number 400, House Bill
6351.

Calendar page 20, Calendar Number 402, Substitute
for House Bill 6193.

Calendar page 21, Calendar 408, House Bill 6322;

Calendar 409, Senate Bill 1013.

Calendar page 23, Calendar 423, Substitute for
Senate Bill 1010.

Calendar page 27, Calendar 443, Substitute Senate
Bill 1149; Calendar 447, Senate Bill 673; Calendar
448, Senate Bill 1029.

Calendar page 30, Calendar 459, House Bill 5138;
Calendar 461, House Bill 6406; Calendar 462,
Substitute for House Bill 6537.

Calendar page 39, Calendar Number 81, Substitute
for Senate Bill 760; Calendar 83, Senate Bill 762;
Calendar 99, Senate Bill 787.

Calendar page 40, Calendar 119, Substitute for
Senate Bill 778.

Calendar page 43, Calendar 171, Senate Bill 251.

Calendar page 46, Calendar Number 266, Senate
Bill Number 382.

Calendar page 51, Calendar Number 356.

SB855

Mr. President, I believe that completes those
items previously placed on the first Consent Calendar.

The Senate is now voting by roll call on the
Consent Calendar, will all Senators please return to
the chamber. The Senate is now voting by roll call on
the Consent Calendar, will all Senators please return

to the chamber.

THE CHAIR:

The machine is open.

Members, please check the board to see if your vote is properly cast and properly recorded. If all members have voted, the machine will be locked.

Would the Clerk please take a tally.

THE CLERK:

Motion is on adoption of Consent Calendar Number 1. Total number voting, 35; those voting yea, 35; those voting nay, 0; those absent/not voting, 1.

THE CHAIR:

Consent Calendar 1 is passed.

Senator Looney.

SENATOR LOONEY:

Yes. Thank you, Mr. President. Mr. President, the two items that appeared on Senate Agenda Number 3, have just been passed on the Consent Calendar. I would move that the first item from Senate Agenda Number 3, House Bill 6716, the emergency certified bill, I move for immediate transmittal of that item to the Governor.

THE CHAIR:

Motion is for immediate transmittal to the

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HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

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April 14, 2009

SPEAKER DONOVAN:

Representative Olson.

REP. OLSON (46th):

Good afternoon, Mr. Speaker.

SPEAKER DONOVAN:

Good afternoon.

REP. OLSON (46th):

We are going to be moving some items to the consent calendar: Calendar Numbers 144, 366, 372, and 384. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

HB 6537
HB 6190
HB 6406
HB 6661

SPEAKER DONOVAN:

The motion before us is to place the following items on the consent calendar for action later in the day. They are Calendar Numbers 144, 366, 372, 384.

Is there objection to the motion? Is there objection?

Hearing none, those items are placed on the consent calendar for action later today.

Representative Hewett.

REP. HEWETT (39th):

Mr. Speaker, in a moment I will be making a motion for referrals of a number of bills to various committees. All the referrals are listed on today's go list.

I am now going to read the calendar numbers and

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Bill as amended is passed.

We're going to try this by machine one more time.
Will Clerk please call Calendar 144.

THE CLERK:

On page 5, Calendar 144, substitute for House
Bill Number 6537, AN ACT CONCERNING THE LEGISLATIVE
COMMISSIONERS' RECOMMENDATIONS FOR TECHNICAL REVISIONS
TO THE PUBLIC HEALTH STATUTES, favorable report of the
Committee on Public Health.

SPEAKER DONOVAN:

Representative Olson.

REP. OLSON (46th):

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. We're about to go
today's consent calendar. We put items previously on
the consent Calendars Numbers 144 -- Calendar Numbers
144, 366, 372, 384, and I move passage of the bills on
the consent calendar. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

HB6537
HB6190
HB6406
HB6661

SPEAKER DONOVAN:

The question before us is passage of the bills on
today's consent calendar. Representative Genga. No.
Okay. Fine.

Will you remark? Will you remark? If not, staff
and guests come to the well of the House. Members
take their seats. The machine will be open.

THE CLERK:

The House of Representatives is voting by roll call. Members to the chamber. The House is voting today's consent calendar by roll call. Members to the chamber.

SPEAKER DONOVAN:

Have all the members voted? Have all the members voted? Members please check the board and make sure your vote has been properly cast. If all members voted, if all members have voted -- hold on. If all members voted, the machine will be locked and the Clerk will take a tally. Clerk -- Representative Miller. Representative Miller, for what reason do you stand? Representative Miller.

REP. MILLER (145th):

My vote didn't register.

SPEAKER DONOVAN:

Okay. And how would you like to be registered, Representative?

REP. MILLER (145th):

Yes.

SPEAKER DONOVAN:

Representative Miller, in the affirmative.

Representative Gonzalez. You're all set.

Representative Geragosian, for what reason do you stand?

REP. GERAGOSIAN (25th):

To be recorded in the affirmative, Mr. Speaker.

SPEAKER DONOVAN:

Representative Geragosian in the affirmative.

Representative Kehoe.

REP. KEHOE (31st):

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I wish to record my vote in the affirmative as well, please.

SPEAKER DONOVAN:

Representative Kehoe, in the affirmative.

Representative Christopher Wright.

REP. WRIGHT (77th):

Mr. Speaker, I wish to cast my vote in the affirmative.

SPEAKER DONOVAN:

Christopher Wright in the affirmative.

Representative Elissa Wright.

REP. WRIGHT (41st):

Mr. Speaker, I wish to cast my vote in the affirmative.

SPEAKER DONOVAN:

Two Wrights make an affirmative. Is there any --

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Representative Gonzalez, you're all set, right?

Clerk, please announce the tally.

THE CLERK:

On today's consent calendar.

Total Number Voting 131

Necessary for Passage 66

Those voting Yea 131

Those voting Nay 0

Those absent and not voting 0

SPEAKER DONOVAN:

Consent calendar passes. Any announcements or introductions? Representative Tallarita.

REP. TALLARITA (58th):

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. For a journal notation.

SPEAKER DONOVAN:

Please proceed, madam.

REP. TALLARITA (58th):

Representative Dargan missed votes today due to family business outside the state; Representative Roldan, due to a memorial service for a family member; Representative Roy, out-of-state; and Representative Villano, due to illness.

And for a transcript notation, Representative Boukus, Aldarondo, Bartlett, Kehoe, Giannaros, Genga,

**JOINT
STANDING
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**SELECT
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that's -- that's what we need.

JOHN HOLLIS: Yeah. He don't --

REP. GRAZIANI: That's what we need.

JOHN HOLLIS: He don't sugarcoat it. (Inaudible) ship as well yours, I might add.

REP. GRAZIANI: Thank you. Thank you very much.

Any questions for Mr. Hollis?

If not, always a pleasure my friend.

JOHN HOLLIS: Thank you, again, or as in the Navy we did (whistling) sweepers, sweepers, start your brooms, give a clean sweep, done four and half, take all trash and garbage to the fan tail.

REP. GRAZIANI: Dismissed, John.

Is there anyone else from the public?

Debbi would you please step forward, Debbi Newton.

DEBBI NEWTON: I'm not sure I want to follow that. My eloquence is just gone at this point.

SB 860

SB 863

HB 6405

SB 861

HB 6406

Good morning, Representative Graziani, and members of the Select Committee on Veterans affairs.

HB 6394

HB 6410

SB 862

HB 6408

For the record, I am Debbi Newton, legislative chair and past president of the National Guard Association of Connecticut, and a 29-year member of the Connecticut Army/National Guard.

You have several bills before you today that

hl/gbr SELECT COMMITTEE ON VETERANS' AFFAIRS 10:00 A.M.

NGACT supports, many of which provide clarifications of language in existing statute. Senate Bill 860, An Act Concerning False Representation of Military Status adds the physical display of rank to the list of items made illegal in legislation either last year or the year before.

Senate Bill 863 and House Bill 6405 also clarify language of existing law.

Senate Bill 861, An Act Concerning Retirement from Military Service expands eligibility to enlisted members to apply for the next higher rank within state upon retirement. Officers have been eligible to do this for many years, and they were able to make application to the state to be promoted to Brigadier General if they retired as colonel. This bill would allow enlisted people that qualified to apply for state promotion to the next higher grade upon retirement.

House Bill 6406, An Act Concerning Military Support Program seeks to formalize a relationship between Department of Mental Health and Addiction Services, the Department of Child and Family Services, and the Department of Veterans Affairs. By adding the Department of veterans Affairs to existing law we support this.

House Bill 6394, An Act Concerning Military Family Relief Fund, seeks to expand the pool of those eligible to apply for the assistance from the fund. As you heard Russell speak about this earlier, he mentioned that there were 25 applications that were denied because the military member of the family was not still currently deployed. Expanding it would probably have allowed most of those 25



STATE OF CONNECTICUT
DEPARTMENT OF VETERANS' AFFAIRS
OFFICE OF THE COMMISSIONER
287 West Street
Rocky Hill, Connecticut 06067

Dr. Linda S. Schwartz, RN, MSN, DrPH, FAAN
Commissioner

TESTIMONY OF DR. LINDA S. SCHWARTZ, COMMISSIONER,
Department of Veterans' Affairs
Submitted to the Select Committee on Veterans' Affairs
February 19, 2009

HB 6406: AN ACT CONCERNING THE MILITARY SUPPORT PROGRAM

Chairman Maynard, Chairman Graziani, and distinguished members of the Select Committee on Veterans' Affairs, I am pleased to offer this written testimony on H 6406, *An Act Concerning the Military Support Program*, which adds the Connecticut Department of Veterans' Affairs (DVA) to CGS Section 17a-453d as a collaborating agency with the Department of Mental Health and Addiction Services (DMHAS) in the oversight and support of the Military Support Program. This language is a technical change reflecting the existing collaboration, support, and responsibilities already performed by the Department of Veterans' Affairs for the Military Support Program. This language change is supported by the Department of Mental Health and Addiction Services.

The Military Support Program, administered by DMHAS, provides free, confidential and accessible behavioral health counseling services to all Connecticut members of the National Guard and Reserves and their families who may be impacted by the stress of active duty deployments.

DVA staff, along with colleagues from DMHAS and the Military Department, contributed to the original design and development of the program, including assisting with and hosting the initial training for volunteer clinicians. The DVA's Office of Advocacy and Assistance has been an active participant in the growth of the Military Support Program through aggressive dissemination of information through benefit offices throughout the state and by staff referrals through the Department's Veterans' Information Line. In addition, the agency has helped develop and air public

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service announcements promoting the program and the agency's website offers a one-stop portal entrance to Military Support Program information for any eligible OEF/OIF veteran or their family in the state. The Military Support Program is also a featured program at all information briefings provided by DVA staff to returning OEF/OIF National Guard and Reserve units, at veterans benefits and job fairs we co-sponsor, and on public college campuses through the Veterans' OASIS centers which we are establishing.

The Military Support Program is a nationwide model for how states can step up to the plate and provide professional, flexible behavioral health services to OEF/OIF veterans and their families to help close the gaps in services provided by the Federal VA. This is a well-designed and effective program that is providing a much-needed lifeline to dozens of service members and families across the state. We are proud to be a collaborating agency on this program and look forward to continuing our active support role.

I urge your support of this bill to add the Department of Veterans' Affairs to the statute establishing the Military Support Program. Thank you.



STATE OF CONNECTICUT

DEPARTMENT OF MENTAL HEALTH
AND ADDICTION SERVICES
A HEALTHCARE SERVICE AGENCY

M. JODI RELL
GOVERNOR

THOMAS A. KIRK, JR., Ph.D.
COMMISSIONER

Memorandum:

TO: Select Committee on Veterans' Affairs

FROM: Thomas A. Kirk, Jr., Ph.D.
Commissioner

DATE: February 19, 2009

SUBJECT: H.B. 6405, An Act Expanding Eligibility for the Military Support Program and H.B. 6406, An Act Concerning the Military Support Program

Sen. Maynard, Rep. Graziani, and distinguished members of the Judiciary Committee, thank you for the opportunity to submit written testimony on H.B. 6405, An Act Expanding Eligibility for the Military Support Program, and H.B. 6406, An Act Concerning the Military Support Program.

DMHAS is a health care agency which provides behavioral health services to persons 18 years of age and older who have psychiatric disabilities and/or substance use disorders. During 2008, we served over 90,000 individuals. We fund a broad spectrum of services and programs for Connecticut residents — including the Military Support Program (MSP), which was developed in concert with the Department of Veterans' Affairs and the Military Department, to assist Reserve Component military personnel and their families as they prepare for deployment, while they are away on active duty in Afghanistan or Iraq, and upon their return to civilian life. The program operates a Call Center that is open 24 hours per day, 7 days per week, to assist Reservists and their families in dealing with a wide array of problems related to their military service.

H.B. 6405 contains language that would expand eligibility for behavioral health services under the MSP from that of "Reservists only" at present to include any member of the U.S. armed forces residing in Connecticut who has been called to active duty in either Operation Enduring Freedom or Operation Iraqi Freedom. While we support the concept, we would be remiss if we did not inform the Committee that treatment services for the additional populations listed in this bill are not funded in the current budget for the MSP. Data from the Defense Manpower Data Center's Contingency Tracking System indicates that approximately 15,000 Connecticut citizens have served in OEF/OIF. Of this number, approximately 5,000 are reserve component personnel, meaning that they served with either the Connecticut National Guard or with a Reserve unit located within the State. The other 10,000 are veterans of active duty military service, and it is to these veterans and their families that the proposed legislation seeks to extend eligibility. Expanding eligibility to OEF/OIF active duty veterans would result in a three-fold increase in the number of persons eligible for Connecticut Military Support Program (MSP) services.

Based on the MSP's rate of expenditure over the last 2 quarters, program projections for the coming year to provide a range of behavioral health services to approximately 350 individuals are \$285,000, or \$814 per person served. Thus, expanding program eligibility to include active duty status OEF/OIF veterans and their families could result in a budget shortfall of as much as \$500,000 per year.

H.B. 6406 would codify the existing practice of having the Department of Veterans Affairs collaborate with us on this very important program, and we support this language.

Thank you for the opportunity to submit testimony to the Committee on H.B. 6405 and H.B. 6406.



National Guard Association of Connecticut

360 Broad Street, Hartford, CT 06105-3795
 www.ngact.com ngact2005@yahoo.com (860) 247-5000

Feb 19, 2009

Testimony in regards to Senate Bills 860, 861, 862 and 863 and House Bills 6405, 6406, 6409, 6410 and 6394

Good morning Senator Maynard, Representative Graziani and members of the Select Committee on Veterans Affairs. Thank you for the opportunity to speak today. I am Debbi Newton, Legislative Chair and past-president of the National Guard Association of Connecticut and a 29 year member of the Connecticut Army National Guard.

You have several bills before you today that NGACTION supports, many of which provide clarifications of language in existing statute. Senate Bill 860, An Act Concerning False Representation of Military Status adds the physical display of rank to the list of items made illegal in legislation last year. Senate Bill 863 and House Bill 6405 also clarify language of existing law.

Senate Bill 861, An Act Concerning Retirement from Military Service expands eligibility to enlisted members to apply for the next higher rank upon retirement. Officers have been eligible to do this for many years and can make application to the state to be promoted to the next higher grade, or rank, not to exceed Brigadier General. This bill would allow enlisted people that qualify to apply for state promotion to the next higher grade upon retirement.

House Bill 6406, An Act Concerning the Military Support Program seeks to formalize the relationship between the Department of Mental Health and Addiction Services, the Department Of Child and Family Services and the Department of Veterans Affairs when providing services to Connecticut Veterans by adding the Department of Veterans Affairs to existing law.

House Bills 6409, An Act Concerning Military Families and 6394, An Act Concerning the Military Family Relief Fund both seek to expand the pool of those eligible to apply for assistance from the Fund.

House Bill 6410, An Act Concerning the use of hand Held Mobile Telephones by members of the Armed Forces while Operating a Motor Vehicle does not give members of the armed services carte blanche to use cell phones and other hand held devices while driving whenever they want to. What it does do is give members of the Armed Forces the flexibility of communications while in an official status. Many times we have emergency