

PA10-015

HB5263

House	568-572	5
Senate	869, 1063-1066	5
Veterans	27-31, 47, 48-49, 93	9
		19

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CONNECTICUT
GENERAL ASSEMBLY
HOUSE**

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you vote has been properly cast. If all the members have voted the machine will be locked and the Clerk will please take a tally.

The Clerk please announce the tally.

THE CLERK:

House Bill 5264 as amended by House "A."

Total Number voting	147
Necessary for adoption	74
Those voting Yea	147
Those voting Nay	0
Those absent and not voting	4

SPEAKER DONOVAN:

The bill passes.

Will the Clerk please call Calendar Number 98.

THE CLERK:

On page 11, Calendar 98, House Bill Number 5263,

AN ACT CONCERNING PROMOTIONS FOR RETIRED VETERANS.

SPEAKER DONOVAN:

Chair of the committée, Representative Graziani, you have the floor, sir.

REP. GRAZIANI (57th):

Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. We're on a roll here, and a good roll. Thank you.

Mr. Speaker, I move for acceptance of the Joint

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Committee's favorable report and accepted passage of the bill.

SPEAKER DONOVAN:

The question is on acceptance of the Joint Committee's favorable report and passage of the bill.

Will you remark, sir?

REP. GRAZIANI (57th):

Yes. Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker.

Members of the Chamber, here we have a situation where people were excluded for a rank that they rightfully deserved. By that I mean they have to serve 30 years or more honorable service in the National Guard. They can apply for this promotion.

And what we did last year, we opened up to enlisted men in the previous year, to enlist -- to officers.

This rank is only symbolic within the State of Connecticut. It has nothing to do with retirements or any type of incentive. It's just only recognized within the State of Connecticut and is not recognized by the federal government.

Also, this gives the opportunity for those who have served the 30 years that perhaps were doing a task such as an aircraft mechanic, if you will,

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actually doing the job and never having the opportunity to achieve that rank during their time of service. This gives them the opportunity to apply for that rank which has to be approved, once again, our adjutant general.

So with that, Mr. Speaker, I urge my colleagues to support this bill. Thank you.

SPEAKER DONOVAN:

Thank you, Representative.

Care to remark further?

Representative Coutu.

REP. COUTU (47th):

Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

I just want to follow up with our ranking member and veterans, and the great job that he's doing.

This bill does help our sergeants and our enlisted force. Officers and warrant officers already have this privilege.

And you may ask, in what case would somebody not achieve their rank in the military? It's structured and there's only so many people who can make certain ranks. And maybe you served 32 years, but you didn't make that promotion to E-8.

In this situation they would be able to reach out

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to the attorney -- adjutant general and basically get that rank symbolically, so there'd be no cost to the State, but it means awfully lot to somebody who's committed over half their life to serve this country. And it also makes if fair when our officers and warrant officers already have this.

So thank you, Mr. Speaker.

SPEAKER DONOVAN:

Thank you, Representative.

Care to remark further? Would you care to remark further? If not, staff and guests please 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 taking a roll call vote. Members to the chamber, please.

SPEAKER DONOVAN:

Have all the members voted? Have all the members voted? Please check the roll call board to make sure your vote has been properly cast. If all the members voted the machine will be locked and the Clerk will please take a tally.

Clerk, please announce the tally.

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THE CLERK:

House Bill 5263.

Total Number voting	146
Necessary for adoption	74
Those voting Yea	146
Those voting Nay	0
Those absent and not voting	5

SPEAKER DONOVAN:

The bill passes.

Will the Clerk please call Calendar 84?

THE CLERK:

On page 1, Calendar 84, House Bill Number 5292,

AN ACT CONCERNING THE LEGISLATIVE COMMISSIONER'S
RECOMMENDED TECHNICAL CHANGES TO THE PUBLIC HEALTH
STATUTES, favorable report by the Committee on Public
Health.

SPEAKER DONOVAN:

Deputy Majority Leader Melissa Olson.

REP. OLSON (46th):

Why, thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Mr. Speaker, we are about to vote on today's
consent calendar. The items on the consent calendar
are Calendar Number 84, Calendar Number 55, Calendar
Number 114; these are items that we moved to the

HB 5292

HB 5138

HB 5114

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Thank you, Mr. President.

Calendar 297, House Bill Number 5219, Mr.

President, move to place this item on the consent
calendar.

THE CHAIR:

Without objection, so ordered.

SENATOR LOONEY:

Thank you, Mr. President.

Calendar 298 is marked go; Calendar 299, PR.

Calendar page 19, Calendar 300, marked go;

Calendar 301, House Bill Number 5263, Mr. President,
move to place this item on the consent calendar.

THE CHAIR:

Without objection, so ordered.

SENATOR LOONEY:

Thank you, Mr. President.

Calendar 302, House Bill Number 5292, move to
place this item on consent calendar.

THE CHAIR:

Without objection, so ordered.

SENATOR LOONEY:

Thank you, Mr. President.

Calendar 303, House Bill Number 5265, move to
place this item on the consent calendar.

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Calendar page 9, Calendar 117, Senate Bill 232.

Calendar page 10, Calendar 119, substitute for
Senate Bill 261; Calendar 124, substitute for Senate
Bill 251.

Calendar page 11, Calendar 149, Senate Bill 244.

Calendar page 12, Calendar 161, substitute for
Senate Bill 258.

Calendar page 13, Calendar 180, substitute for
Senate Bill 152.

Calendar page 14, Calendar 216, substitute for
Senate Bill 256; Calendar 217, substitute for Senate
Bill 201; Calendar 222, substitute for Senate Bill
275.

Calendar page 15, Calendar Number 233, Senate
Bill Number 97.

Calendar Number -- page 16, Calendar 239, Senate
Bill 105.

Calendar page 17, Calendar 270, substitute for
Senate Bill 234.

Calendar page 18, Calendar 296, substitute for
House Bill 5138; Calendar 297, substitute for House
Bill 5219; Calendar 298, House Bill 5250.

Calendar page 19, Calendar 301, House Bill 5263;
Calendar 302, House Bill 5292; Calendar 303, House

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Bill 5265; Calendar 313, substitute for House Bill
5002.

Calendar page 20, Calendar 314, House Bill 5201.

Calendar page 24, Calendar 340, substitute for
Senate Bill 175.

Calendar page 25, Calendar 346, substitute for
Senate Bill 151; Calendar 350, Senate Bill 333;
Calendar 371, substitute for House Bill 5014.

Calendar page 26, Calendar 375, House Bill 5320.

Calendar page 27, Calendar 379, substitute for
House Bill 5278; Calendar 380, substitute for House
Bill 5452; Calendar 381, substitute for House Bill
5006; Calendar 382, House Bill 5157.

Calendar page 28, Calendar 384, substitute for
House Bill 5204.

Calendar page 29, Calendar 395, substitute for
Senate Bill 127; Calendar 396, Senate Bill 147.

Calendar page 30, Calendar 413, House Bill 5024;
Calendar 414, substitute for House Bill 5401.

Calendar page 31, Calendar 419, substitute for
House Bill 5303.

Calendar 32 -- page 32, Calendar Number 421,
substitute for House Bill 5388; and on calendar page
34, Calendar 46, substitute for Senate Bill 68;

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SENATE

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Calendar 50, substitute for Senate Bill 17.

Calendar page 35, Calendar 64, substitute for
Senate Bill 187.

Calendar page 37, Calendar 109, substitute for
Senate Bill 189.

Calendar page 39, Calendar Number 148, substitute
for Senate Bill 226.

Calendar page 40, Calendar 182, substitute for
Senate Bill 218.

Calendar page 41, Calendar 188, substitute for
Senate Bill 200.

Mr. President, that completes those items placed
on the consent calendar.

THE CHAIR:

All right. If the Clerk has made an announcement
that a roll call vote is in progress in the Senate on
the first consent calendar, the machine will be open.
Senators may cast their vote.

THE CLERK:

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.

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THE CHAIR:

Would all Senators please check the roll call board to make certain that your vote is properly recorded. If all Senators have voted and if all votes are properly recorded, the machine will be locked, and the Clerk may 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 and not voting	1

THE CHAIR:

Consent Calendar Number 1 is passed.

Are there any announcements or points of personal privilege? Are there any announcements or points of personal privilege?

Senator LeBeau.

SENATOR LEBEAU:

Thank you, Mr. President, for a -- for an announcement.

THE CHAIR:

Please proceed.

**JOINT
STANDING
COMMITTEE
HEARINGS**

**SELECT
COMMITTEE
ON VETERANS'
AFFAIRS
1 – 181**

Part 1

2010

for the record, we just received some written testimony from the Department of DMV who, quite frankly, think the practice currently now that they have indeed works, and we will look at it, and, obviously, we want to thank you again for bringing it to our attention.

REP. FLEXER: Thank you. Thank you so much.

REP. GRAZIANI: Thank you, again.

I don't see any other elected officials or commissioner or deputy commissioner or agency head that signed up, but if they're certainly here, they -- this is your opportunity.

If not, we'll go directly in to the public portion of today's informational hearing testimony. So with that, we'll start off with former Representative Chet Morgan.

Chet. You are on the other sheet, my friend.

CHET MORGAN: Good morning.

My name is Chet Morgan, First Sergeant, Retired, Connecticut Army National Guard and former state rep from Vernon for the 56th District. I am here to ask for your support for a bill recently raised in your committee, House Bill 5263, AN ACT CONCERNING PROMOTIONS FOR RETIRED VETERANS.

Under prior law, an officer or warrant officer of the Connecticut National Guard who served ten years as an officer or enlisted person, including three years as a commissioned officer or warrant officer, could apply and be placed on the retired list in the highest grade in which he or she had served. An officer or warrant officer who had served 20 or more years

cp/gbr SELECT COMMITTEE ON VETERANS'
AFFAIRS

9:30 A.M.

could apply and be commissioned and placed on the list in the next highest grade at which he or she was ever commissioned, but no higher than brigadier general.

While a member of the Legislature from 1977 to 1983, and simultaneously a senior enlisted member of the Connecticut Army National Guard, I felt this was discriminatory. I tried to enact similar legislation for enlisted grades, but ran into opposition from senior officer members of the Guard.

Last year, you took a big step in Public Act 09-4 that allowed, one, all members who serve ten years to apply to be placed on the list in the highest grade in which they had served; and, two, all members who serves 20 years or more to apply to be placed on the list at one grade higher above the highest grade they ever held, but not above brigadier general or sergeant major.

Public Act 09-4 also allowed each member only one retirement promotion, and it requires the application be timely and submitted to the adjutant general through the chain of command before the member retires. Under prior law, before an 09-4, an officer could apply, one, while in service through proper officers; or two, after leaving service, directly to the adjutant general.

I propose a revision to Section 27-50 of the Connecticut General Statutes which would allow all retired members of the Armed Forces of the state who served honorably for 30 or more years, which I did, to apply directly to the Adjutant General to be placed on the list one grade above the highest grade they ever served, but not above sergeant major or brigadier

general.

It would just be an honorary title, but would mean so much to many retired enlisted Connecticut Guardsmen, including myself, who served our state and country for so many years. I had an occurrence last September. There were two National Guardsmen that were master sergeants that retired in September. Their retirement party was in mid-September, and I went to them, and I told them they could apply for this. I didn't realize that they had already retired, and when they applied, they were denied, because they had already retired.

So I thank you for your time. I hope to correct this. And I'd be glad to answer any questions, and I'd just want to state one more thing: I'm in full agreement with your clean-up of the tuition bill, because in 1981 as a state representative, I introduced and secured passage of the tuition bill for free tuition at state colleges for National Guardsmen, and I understand that it -- it hit a glitch after you repaired it, or upgraded it, and I fully support the bill that's in there to make it what it is while under your proposal.

Thank you, and it's good to see some of you old guys. And I think this is the first time I was ever on this side of the microphone, and I see Peggy Sayers and Frank Nicastro and some of my old buddies. But thank you very much, and I'd be glad to answer any questions.

REP. GRAZIANI: Thank you very much, Chet.

I know this is a subject matter dear and near to your heart.

Any questions?

If not, thank you very much, Chet.

REP. MORGAN: There -- there was a meeting here, I guess -- I was -- I didn't attend it, but there was a meeting here on Tuesday of a veterans group, and they spoke highly of this bill, too, so I hope you will do it, and I thank you Representative Graziani for being kind to me in being able to get this bill raised so I can come and testify at public hearing.

REP. GRAZIANI: Thank you for those kind words.

Before we go on to our next public speaker, I'd like to -- I notice our Speaker of the House and professor is here, and Mr. Speaker, it's all yours.

REP. DONOVAN: Good morning. Mr. Chairman and members of the committee, it's great to see you here. Actually, I'm here as a private citizen here, not as Speaker, because I teach a -- try to -- I've got to figure that out, but I teach an American government course at the University of Hartford, and I thought the students should see pretty much how it really works, so bring them here to the Capitol.

So we have a number of students from the University of Hartford. They're a very good class, and they wanted to see how you operate, so they've been taking notes and observing and listening to the testimony, and we'll find out what they thought -- thought of all of us. So I just want to say thank you for -- for being here and working on these important issues, and I look forward to working with you in the months ahead. So thanks again.

REP. GRAZIANI: Well, thank you, and let's recognize

these students.

REP. DONOVAN: Why don't you wave to everybody, students, there you go.

Thank you, and good luck with the hearing.

REP. GRAZIANI: Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker.

And now, if there is any negative comments, there's a trash on the way out. The positive comments, just take them and give them to the Speaker.

REP. DONOVAN: Thank you, again. And I thank the committee and the public for their indulgence on that.

REP. GRAZIANI: Our next speaker would be Christopher Ashley with the Connecticut Association of Realtors.

Christopher.

CHRISTOPHER ASHE: Well, good morning.

REP. GRAZIANI: Good morning.

CHRISTOPHER ASHE: My name is Christopher Ashe, and I'm the Chairperson of the Legislative Committee of the Connecticut Association of Realtors.

I come before you to thank you for raising Bill 209 and to respectfully urge a -- an early vote to move it to the floor of the Senate. The bill gives a very targeted relief from a punitive tax for a small population of homeowners, National Guardsmen or Reservists on active duty or regular members of the Armed Forces stationed in Connecticut, who are forced

Any questions?

If not, thank you, Rusty.

RUSTY MEEK: Thank you.

REP. NICASTRO: Thank you very much. Have a good day.

J. Hollis of VFW.

A VOICE: (Inaudible.)

REP. NICASTRO: Good morning, sir.

JOHN HOLLIS: Good morning.

I do this quite often, I don't think I could do it near as eloquent as you did, and your points were well taken. Congratulations. Wonderful job.

A VOICE: Here, here.

JOHN HOLLIS: Good morning, members of the Select Committee on Veterans' Affairs, Commissioner Schwartz. Thank you for allowing me to be here.

My name is John Hollis. I'm a Navy veteran of the Cuban Missile Crisis, and I presently serve as a legislative chairman for the Department of Connecticut. I also serve with our National Legislative Committee representing Connecticut in Washington, D.C. So many times you thank us for our service and -- and let me take the opportunity to thank you for your service to the men and women that serve this great nation. This committee is doing -- does a tremendous job in advancing legislation that has such a

SB 210
SB 211
HB 5263
SB 214

significant impact on veterans across the state.

State Commander of Veterans of Foreign War, William Hornok, sends his best wishes. I spoke with him yesterday regarding a number of these -- these bills before us today. It -- it suffices to say that we -- we certainly support all of them. I know that you've given a lot of thought, and the submission of these raised bills are very, very important. Just to touch on a couple. Certainly Bill -- Senate Bill 210, PROPERTY TAX EXEMPTION, is very significant.

Senate Bill 211, CRIMINAL CASES. That is -- is near and dear to me. I -- I chose 30 years ago to abstain from alcohol. I was one of those Irish guys that enjoyed the beer more than I should have and got myself into quite a bit of mischief. And I've seen so many veterans, and I never miss an opportunity to help not only veterans, but anyone that's having problems.

And I've seen so many of these cases. Monday, we have a veteran going away for approximately four months because of accumulation of motor vehicle charges. He's so stressed over this, he's been in New Britain Hospital last week for five days, and the admission doctor said this is related to stress. This guy is having a constant panic attack about going away for a minimum of four months over motor vehicle charges, served this great nation many years ago. There's so many of those cases out there. I think we need to look at them very, very serious.

I'd be in deep trouble if I didn't support 5263 for my good friend Chet.

Chet, thank you for serving in this body. What a wonderful job you did for us. You've been a friend of mine for many years, but we, too, of the Veterans of Foreign War support that.

And as I've said on many occasions to this committee and those that are around us today, that we see -- we received significant support and legislation, but oftentimes it gets out of this committee, goes through another committee or goes to the Senate, the House for an up and down vote, and sometimes some of these gets lost, and they don't have an understanding of the compassion that we have in this room. And I take a personal responsibility to follow this legislation throughout this process, so we can be effective in getting this signed by the Governor.

So it doesn't just end here. We need to continue to follow this legislation to -- to the very end and be there when the Governor signs it. Camp Niantic, I thought that was great, and the local VFW supported that, so we, certainly, on the state level support that.

SB214

And, again, I want to thank you all for allowing me to testify, and I'm grateful for all you folks do, and if there's any questions, I'll be more than happy to answer it.

REP. GRAZIANI: Thank you very much, John.

But first let me -- Rusty, I'm sorry. I had to leave the room. No totally disrespect.

JOHN HOLLIS: I thought that was intentional, and I commend you.

REP. GRAZIANI: So noted in the record.



First Sergeant (Ret)
Chester W. Morgan
60-37 Old Town Road
Vernon CT 06066-2373
Phone: (860) 875-8756
Email: chet1@snet.net



TESTIMONY ON RHB 5263

Good morning. I am here to ask for your support for a bill recently raised in you committee. It is titled; AAC Promotions For Retired Veteran, number RHB 5263

Under prior law, an officer or warrant officer of the Connecticut National Guard who served 10 years as an officer or enlisted person, including at least three years as a commissioned officer or warrant officer, could apply and be placed on the retired list in the highest grade in which he or she served. An officer or warrant officer who served 20 or more years could apply and be commissioned and placed on the list at the next highest grade at which he or she was ever commissioned, but no higher than a general While a member of the Legislature from 1977 to 1983 and simultaneously a senior enlisted member of the CT Army National Guard, I felt this to be discriminatory. I tried to enact similar legislation for Enlisted grades, but ran into opposition from Senior Officer members of the Guard.

PA 09-4 allowed (1) all members who serve 10 years to apply to be placed on the list in the highest grade in which they served and (2) all members who serve 20 or more years to apply to be placed on the list at one grade above the highest grade they ever held, but not above brigadier general or sergeant major.

PA 09-4 also allowed each member only one retirement promotion, and it requires that applications be timely and submitted to the adjutant general through the chain of command before the member retires. Under prior law, an officer could apply (1) while in service, through proper officers, or (2) after leaving service, directly to the adjutant general.

I propose a revision to Section 27-50 of the CT General Statutes that would allow all retired member of the Armed Forces of the state who served honorably for 30 or more years (which I did) to apply directly to the Adjutant General to be placed on the list at one grade above the highest grade they ever held, but not above sergeant major.

It would just be an honorary title but would mean so much to retired enlisted CT Guardsmen, including myself, who served our State and Country for so many years. Thank you for your time and I would be glad to answer any questions.

chet/lthead2