

PA10-016

HB5265

House	550-560	11
Senate	869-870, 1063-1066	6
Veterans	23-27, (50), (51-52), 94-97, 101	13
		30

**H – 1074
CONNECTICUT
GENERAL ASSEMBLY
HOUSE**

**PROCEEDINGS
2010**

**VOL.53
PART 2
294 – 594**

rgd/md/mb
HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

105
April 7, 2010

The bill passes.

Mr. Clerk, please call Calendar 147.

THE CLERK:

On page 16, Calendar 147, House Bill Number 5265,
AN ACT CONCERNING THE EXPLORATION OF DRIVERS LICENSES
ISSUED TO MEMBERS OF THE ARMED FORCES, favorable
report by the Committee on Transportation.

DEPUTY SPEAKER O'ROURKE:

Representative Graziani.

REP. GRAZIANI (57th):

Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker.

Mr. Speaker, I move for acceptance of the Joint
Committee's favorable report and passage of the bill.

DEPUTY SPEAKER O'ROURKE:

The motion is 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.

First of all, I'd like to thank Representative
Mae Flexer for bringing this bill to our veterans'
attention. And basically what this bill does is to
provide a 30-day period for members that are no longer
in Connecticut, whether they be active-duty or out of

rgd/md/mb
HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

106
April 7, 2010

our state. Their license will not automatically expire through no fault of their own.

This is an important factor because this incident has occurred, believe it or not. So what this does is allow that person, upon honorable discharge or upon returning to the state, to keep their papers, so to speak, in their glove compartment.

And if their license has expired and they're pulled over, all they have to do is show the documentation and there's no penalty.

So I move acceptance of -- the passage of the bill.

DEPUTY SPEAKER O'ROURKE:

Thank you, sir.

Will you remark? Will you remark?

Representative Chapin.

REP. CHAPIN (67th):

Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Through you, a couple of questions to the proponent of the bill, please?

DEPUTY SPEAKER O'ROURKE:

Representative Graziani, please prepare yourself.

Representative Chapin.

REP. CHAPIN (67th):

Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

If a person had not returned to the state, yet was driving in another state and hadn't had the opportunity to renew his license, but was carrying an expired license, how would the law enforcement in that state be able to tell that at least the State of Connecticut recognizes an additional 30-day grace period? Through you, Mr. Speaker.

DEPUTY SPEAKER O'ROURKE:

Representative Graziani.

REP. GRAZIANI (57th):

That would probably go through the Department of Motor Vehicles. The way the system is currently set up, the DMV automatically sends out license renewals. The problem being with that is if it goes to a household and that person is, say for an example, deployed in Iraq or Afghanistan, for example, it would be up to the family member to notify DMV.

What DMV would do, quite frankly, is put on their -- in the internal IT bank, that that license is still valid. So all one has to do is call it in, so to speak, to DMV and they'll be notified that that person's license has not expired.

Through you.

rgd/md/mb
HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

108
April 7, 2010

DEPUTY SPEAKER O'ROURKE:

Representative Chapin.

REP. CHAPIN (67th):

Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

And again, through you, so if I'm an active-duty member and I haven't made it back to the state of Connecticut, but I'm in the state of Florida, for instance, and I get pulled over. And I have an expired drivers license in my possession, do Florida law enforcement authorities have the ability to check a database that Connecticut would have made that notation in?

Through you, Mr. Speaker.

DEPUTY SPEAKER O'ROURKE:

Representative Graziani.

REP. GRAZIANI (57th):

Through you, Mr. Speaker.

I'm assuming all 50 states have access to run somebody's license. Through you.

DEPUTY SPEAKER O'ROURKE:

Representative Chapin.

REP. CHAPIN (67th):

Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

And again, through you, and in the cases of

rgd/md/mb
HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

109
April 7, 2010

somebody who may be on active duty, perhaps in Germany or out of the country; maybe not in Iraq or Afghanistan, how would it work if that person was pulled over in -- by the German authorities? Through you, Mr. Speaker.

DEPUTY SPEAKER O'ROURKE:

Representative Graziani.

REP. GRAZIANI (57th):

That goes -- I guess you go to our consulate. I have no idea how that would work in offshore.

Through you, Mr. Speaker.

DEPUTY SPEAKER O'ROURKE:

Representative Chapin.

REP. CHAPIN (67th):

Thank you, Mr. Speaker, and I thank the gentleman for his answers.

DEPUTY SPEAKER O'ROURKE:

Will you remark?

The Chair recognizes Representative Nicastro of the 79th District.

REP. NICASTRO (79th):

Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Mr. Speaker, I rise in strong support of this legislation. It's become more and more -- as we see

rgd/md/mb
HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

110
April 7, 2010

what's happening over in Iraq, Afghanistan, it's become more and more necessary to support our troops in each and every way. They're being called out left and right, all forces, all different branches of the service.

As you well know, we now have 1200 Connecticut National Guardsmen and women who have been sent over to Iraq and Afghanistan. And sometimes, you know, things get -- because of the hurriedness of all of this going on, they need that support. We've got to do something to support them.

This is such -- in the scheme of things, this is such a minor thing that we can do to help all our veterans that are serving right now, to give them this extension of time, because when they get called out, lots of times things are, you know, happen after they're gone, such as a license expiring.

This here, Mr. Speaker, supports our men and women of the armed forces by saying, look, we're not going to take your license away. When you get back, you've got a chance to make sure that you renew it. And I would ask all my colleagues to consider that. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

DEPUTY SPEAKER O'ROURKE:

rgd/md/mb
HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

111
April 7, 2010

Thank you, Representative Nicastro.

Representative Flexer of the 44th. You have the floor.

REP. FLEXER (44th):

Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

I rise in support of this bill this afternoon. I want to thank the leadership of the Veterans Affairs Committee and Representative Graziani and all the members of the committee for supporting this bill and bringing it forward, as well as the members of the transportation committee.

This idea came to me from a constituent of mine, Sergeant First Class John Bellville. He was serving in Iraq last year, and Congressman Joe Courtney had gone to Iraq on a congressional delegation trip and had met with a number of service members, including Sergeant Bellville.

During that conversation, Sergeant Bellville shared his concerns about the inability of people who are on active duty to easily renew their driver's licenses while stationed overseas. Congressman Courtney encouraged him to contact me, as he's a resident of Killingly, and as my constituent as well, and I'm proud to have been able to have worked with

rgd/md/mb

112

HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

April 7, 2010

Congressman Courtney on this issue. He's been a great advocate, and I want to thank him as well for helping us to move this bill forward.

And I especially want to thank Sergeant Bellville. In addition to having his own difficulties from time to time while stationed overseas and renewing his drivers license, he also is, in his responsibilities in the army, is charged with assigning various transportation duties to other service members.

And during his work he discovered that in other states they had different provisions to allow active duty service members to renew their driver's licenses more easily. In particular, in the state of California they have this same model where you are -- have a valid drivers license for 30 days after your separation honorably from service in the United States military. So I want to thank him for his knowledge and expertise on this issue and for bringing this forward to us.

We are modeling this after what is currently being done in California, and I want to thank everyone for their support and encourage my colleagues to support this bill this afternoon. Thank you.

rgd/md/mb
HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

113
April 7, 2010

DEPUTY SPEAKER O'ROURKE:

Very good. Thank you, Representative Flexer.

Will you remark?

Representative Coutu of the 47th, you have the floor, sir.

REP. COUTU (47th):

Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

I just want to follow up. This has been in other states like California. There's other states that are addressing similar issues: Virginia, Washington, Georgia.

I don't think this -- there's an epidemic of soldiers coming back who have licenses that have expired, but in the cases where they're deployed this is something that we can support.

DMV has been working with our soldiers in the past, making sure they have some flexibility, but I think this gives them, where if they do have the situation to return and they don't have a valid license, it gives them a little bit of leniency to make sure that they can get their license updated.

So thank you, Mr. Speaker.

DEPUTY SPEAKER O'ROURKE:

Thank you, Representative.

rgd/md/mb
HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

114
April 7, 2010

Will you remark? Will you remark on the bill before us? Will you remark? If not, staff and guests please come to the well of the House. Members take your seats and 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.

DEPUTY SPEAKER O'ROURKE:

Have all members voted? Have all members voted? Please check the board to ensure that your vote is properly recorded. If all members have voted, the machine will be locked and the Clerk will take a tally.

Mr. Clerk, if you're ready, please announce the tally.

THE CLERK:

House Bill 5265.	
Total Number voting	145
Necessary for adoption	74
Those voting Yea	145
Those voting Nay	0
Those absent and not voting	6

DEPUTY SPEAKER O'ROURKE:

rgd/md/mb
HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

115
April 7, 2010

The bill passes.

Mr. Clerk, please call Calendar 33.

THE CLERK:

On page 22, Calendar 33, House Bill Number 5011,
AN ACT EXTENDING THE EFFECTIVE DATE FOR CERTAIN
INTERLOCAL RISK MANAGEMENT POOLS, favorable report by
the Committee on Planning and Development.

DEPUTY SPEAKER O'ROURKE:

The Chair recognizes Chairman Fontana.

REP. FONTANA (87th):

Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Mr. Speaker, I move for acceptance of the
joint --

DEPUTY SPEAKER O'ROURKE:

One minute, Mr. -- Representative Fontana. Hang
on.

Folks, we're getting noisy again. Give your
attention to -- Representative Fontana is talking on
an important bill.

REP. FONTANA (87th):

Thank you, sir.

Mr. Speaker, I move for acceptance of the Joint
Committee's favorable report and passage of the bill.

DEPUTY SPEAKER O'ROURKE:

S - 600

**CONNECTICUT
GENERAL ASSEMBLY
SENATE**

**PROCEEDINGS
2010**

**VOL. 53
PART 3
618 - 932**

cd
SENATE

23
April 21, 2010

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.

cd
SENATE

24
April 21, 2010

THE CHAIR:

Without objection, so ordered.

SENATOR LOONEY:

Thank you, Mr. President.

Calendar 313, House Bill Number 5002, move to
place this item on the consent calendar.

THE CHAIR:

Without objection, so ordered, sir.

SENATOR LOONEY:

Thank you, Mr. President.

Moving to calendar page 20, Calendar 314, House
Bill Number 5201, Mr. President, move to place this
item on the consent calendar.

THE CHAIR:

Seeing no objection, so ordered.

SENATOR LOONEY:

Thank you, Mr. President.

Calendar 315, PR; Calendar 316, Senate Bill
Number 278, Mr. President, move to refer this item to
the Appropriations Committee.

THE CHAIR:

Without objection, so ordered.

SENATOR LOONEY:

Thank you, Mr. President.

S - 601

**CONNECTICUT
GENERAL ASSEMBLY
SENATE**

**PROCEEDINGS
2010**

**VOL. 53
PART 4
933 - 1266**

cd
SENATE

217
April 21, 2010

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

cd
SENATE

218
April 21, 2010

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;

cd
SENATE

219
April 21, 2010

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.

cd
SENATE

220
April 21, 2010

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

REP. GRAZIANI: Thank you very much, Corky. If I may call you Corky.

REP. MAZUREK: You absolutely may call me Corky.

REP. GRAZIANI: Any comments from members of the committee?

I just want to thank you, again, Representative, for bringing this to our attention. You have strong, passionate feelings about it, and it shows, and it's very important --

REP. MAZUREK: Thank you.

REP. GRAZIANI: -- so we'll do everything that we can to (inaudible).

REP. MAZUREK: Thank you. Thank you, Mr. Chairman, and thank the rest of you.

REP. GRAZIANI: I see Representative Mae Flexer.

REP. FLEXER: Good morning. Thank you. Thank you for having me here this morning.

I want to thank Representative Graziani, Senator Maynard, and the members of the Veteran's Affairs Committee for the opportunity to testify in support of House Bill 5265, AN ACT CONCERNING THE EXPIRATION OF DRIVER'S LICENSES ISSUED TO MEMBERS OF THE ARMED FORCES.

Last summer, Congressman Joe Courtney met with our mutual constituent, Sergeant First Class John Bellville, while in Iraq on a Congressional Delegation trip. During this meeting, the Sergeant notified Congressman Courtney of a common driver's license renewal

problem facing Connecticut servicemen and women. Under current law, an active duty soldier serving outside of the state of Connecticut cannot renew their license.

Based off the California model, I am proposing legislation, House Bill 5265, that will temporarily allow the license of a Connecticut service member actively serving outside of the state to remain valid beyond its normal expiration date. This bill extends the validity of a license for up to 30 days following a service member's return from active duty or honorable separation from such service.

The moratorium only takes effect while the person is driving and only if both the license and discharge or separation papers are in his or her possession. Further, this exception will not apply to any license that has been suspended, cancelled or revoked.

Members of the Armed Forces should not be penalized by regulations that trigger during their time of service. To have our volunteer force face difficulties during the course of duty, due to their absence from the state and country they are protecting, sends a completely mixed message.

Your committee deserves credit for removing obstacles from the paths of our troops returning home and for untangling the red tape they may otherwise face. Other states have taken the time to address this discrepancy, and I strongly encourage your support in doing the same here in Connecticut.

I wish to sincerely thank Representative Graziani, Senator Maynard and the committee for raising this bill and allowing it to be heard.

I also want to genuinely thank Congressman Courtney for his interest in bringing this proposal before the General Assembly and his tremendous advocacy on behalf of this legislation.

And if it's okay with the Chairman, I would like to read a few words from Sergeant First Class John Bellville in support of this legislation.

REP. GRAZIANI: Absolutely.

REP. FLEXER: Thank you.

This is from Sergeant John Bellville's testimony. He is a constituent in the service of the U.S. Army from the town of Killingly.

I have been on active duty for the past 16 years. Through this time of service, I have had to renew my state driver's license several times. One of these times was shortly after return from being stationed in Germany. Upon return to the United States, I was unable to drive because my license was expired.

I recently experienced a second time that, without action upon my return to the U.S. from abroad, I would not be able to drive. I preplanned this time by contacting the State Department of Motor Vehicles to try to solve my problem before it occurred. I was informed that the soonest I could renew my license would be 90 days before it expired. With that being the case, I found I was lucky that my deployment started just 30 days after that window opened. I would have been out of luck and in a greater bind had this not happened.

Being a noncommissioned officer in the Armed

Forces, I have many duties. One of these duties is to take care of my soldiers. I have to inspect their driver's licenses and verify that they are not expired. During one such inspection, I came across a soldier from the state of California that had what looked like an expired driver's license.

After researching his state's laws, I found that so long as they had an active duty military identification card, their license will not expire. I was perplexed that one could take such care of their statesmen while serving their country. When I ran into my license expiring during my next deployment to Iraq, I was curious why the state of Connecticut could not do the same.

With the current laws, it does not cost me to renew, per se, but with the amount of postage, paperwork and personnel to process the actions, it is paid for in the taxes of every individual in this state. Thank you for allowing me the time to express my concerns and my thoughts. I can only ask that you take my recommendations into great consideration and act in the best interest of your statement -- statesmen that are defending our country.

Thank you.

REP. GRAZIANI: Thank you very much for your testimony.

Any questions from the members of the committee?

I just want to thank you, and for the record, we do have -- the committee has in front of them the letter from Congressman Joe Courtney dated February 25th in full support. And also

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

But no -- John, thank you again for making the time.

Any questions?

John, thank you. Keep up the great work as always.

JOHN HOLLIS: Thank you.

REP. GRAZIANI: Speaker, I'd just like to break and introduce Harold Cooney from the Department of Defense from Washington, D.C., who I invited up here. And the reason I'm doing that -- we do have a meeting with our majority leader, and then we're going across the street to the adjutant general to have him meet with his people as well. And Harold had to reschedule his trip, some sort of excuse about some snowstorm in D.C. a couple weeks ago, but he made the effort to be here, and he will be here all day.

So without further ado, Harold Cooney, Department of Defense, who represents the whole greater New England region.

Thank you, Harold.

HAROLD COONEY: Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Thank you, committee, for this opportunity.

I'm always humbled when I attend these, these sessions. Just looking around the room, I -- I've -- first thing you learn in the military is know your audience, and so I've -- I've seen your bios, and the service that's represented on this committee is -- it's obvious that you're here because you have -- you have a person -- you have personal experience.

(SB 209)

(HB 5265)

(SB 314)

(HB 5259)

As I look around the room and can see the organizations represented, I can't help but believe that we're in good hands across the nation, having spent 30 years in uniform and five years since working with the Department of Defense. I did commute for five years to D.C. from Pennsylvania, 210 miles one way, because I felt once I retired I needed -- I needed to take those -- those -- reach those pinnacles of our -- of our careers when you -- they call it mandatory retirement dates -- and I was forced out at 30 years of service, because I hadn't attained the rank of brigadier general.

So I thought that's just terrible how we do that in the military, but don't put that on record please. The -- without having -- having gained that kind of experience, I felt I wanted to continue to contribute to the -- to the family that I left on active duty, and I found that -- that this job allowed me to do that quickly. The Undersecretary of Defense for a Military Community Family Policy is the proponent for my -- the office which I work.

Our purpose, in the DOD State Liaison Office, is to educate and inform the ER, a DOD entity, so we don't lobby. But we educate and inform organizations like yourselves, certainly state Legislators and Legislatures, about the things that are important to our servicemen and women. You know what's important to your people in your state, because you have these great spokespersons to bring that information to you.

What we're looking at across the Department of Defense is to kind of level the playing field across all the states. As you heard here about everything from conveyance taxes to -- to other things, driver's licenses, is that a certain

(SB 209)

(HB 5265)

family that moves from one state to the other finds a whole myriad of laws and regulations sort of differ by state. And it's -- it's hard-up for them to understand military regulations without having to try to figure out what -- what the current state does in terms of taxes, et cetera.

So our -- our purpose is to educate and inform. They -- each year, the Department of Defense selects ten issues that they think are very important. I am proud to report that Connecticut is high on that list of states who have taken appropriate action, thanks to this committee in many cases and the members of this committee, in terms of interstate compact and educational opportunities for children and unemployment compensation for trailing spouses.

Each year, that list changes. This year there are -- there are two more issues that were added, that were changed, having to do with child custody, and the person was authorized to -- to direct disposition of remains. A subject that's not a very popular one, I might add, because it's not one that people want to talk about. When you leave the country to serve on active duty overseas, you don't think about those issues of who do -- who do I want to direct my remains. And when families are torn as they are with the rate of divorce in our country today, it's incredible the lawsuits that we have while we have our service member lay on cold slabs somewhere waiting for someone to dispose of these remains.

(SB 314)

And so that's a very big issue for us, and I'll be -- we've been talking, Representative Graziani is a great supporter here. And of these programs we've talked, you know, a good bit about that, and we'll be looking at some



State of Connecticut
 HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
 STATE CAPITOL
 HARTFORD, CONNECTICUT 06106-1591

REPRESENTATIVE MAE FLEXER
 FORTY-FOURTH ASSEMBLY DISTRICT

LEGISLATIVE OFFICE BUILDING
 ROOM 4009
 HARTFORD, CT 06106-1591
 CAPITOL: (860) 240-8585
 TOLL FREE: 1-800-842-8267
 FAX: (860) 240-0206
 E-MAIL: Mae.Flexer@cga.ct.gov

MEMBER
 HIGHER EDUCATION AND EMPLOYMENT
 ADVANCEMENT COMMITTEE
 HUMAN SERVICES COMMITTEE
 PLANNING AND DEVELOPMENT COMMITTEE
 INTERNSHIP COMMITTEE

February 24, 2010

Veterans' Affairs Committee

Testimony for HB-5265

*AAC the Expiration of Driver's Licenses Issued to Members of the
 Armed Forces*

I want to thank Representative Graziani and Senator Maynard and the members of the committee for the opportunity to testify in support of House Bill 5265, An Act Concerning the Expiration of Driver's Licenses Issued to Members of the Armed Forces.

Congressman Joe Courtney met with our mutual constituent, Sergeant First Class John Bellville, while in Iraq on a Congressional Delegation trip. During this meeting, the Sergeant notified Congressman Courtney of a common driver's license renewal problem facing Connecticut service men and women. Under current law, an active duty soldier serving outside of the state cannot renew their license

Based off of the California model, I am proposing legislation, House Bill 5265, that will temporarily allow the license of a Connecticut service member, actively serving outside the state, to remain valid beyond its normal expiration date. This bill extends the validity of a license for up to 30 days following a service member's return from active duty or honorable separation from such service. The moratorium only takes effect while the person is driving, and only if both the license and discharge or separation papers are in his or her possession. Further, this exception will not apply to any license that has been suspended cancelled, or revoked.

2

Members of the armed forces should not be penalized by regulations that trigger during their time of service. To have our volunteer force incurring fines during the course of duty - due to their absence from the state and country they are protecting - sends a completely mixed message. Your committee deserves credit for removing obstacles from the paths of our troops returning home, and for untangling the red tape they may otherwise face. Other states have taken the time to address this discrepancy, and I strongly encourage your support in doing the same.

I wish to sincerely thank Rep. Graziani and Sen. Maynard for raising this bill and allowing it to be heard. I also want to genuinely thank Congressman Courtney for his interest in bringing this proposal before the General Assembly and his tremendous advocacy on behalf of this legislation.

January 29, 2010

2010-R-0045

**DRIVER'S LICENSE RENEWALS
FOR SERVICE MEMBERS STATIONED ABROAD**

By: Kevin E. McCarthy, Principal Analyst

You asked whether other states have provisions for facilitating driver's license renewal for members of the armed forces stationed abroad.

SUMMARY

This report describes license renewal provisions in California, Georgia, Idaho, New York, Virginia, and Washington for members of the armed forces (service members). Most of these provisions apply when the service member is in another state or abroad.

In California, the license of a service member on active duty out of state is valid for up to 30 days following the date on which he or she is honorably separated from such service or returns to California.

Georgia (1) gives service members a six-month grace period to renew their licenses and (2) allows active duty military and their dependents (as well as students) to renew their license by mail.

Idaho permits members of the military preparing to deploy overseas or out of state to renew their license and vehicle registration up to 12 months early.

In New York, a driver's license is automatically extended while a person is on active duty and for up to six months after discharge.

Virginia allows a service member temporarily assigned to duty out of state, or his or her spouse or dependent, to apply for a military extension of his or her driver's license by mail. The license is valid for up to five years.

Washington allows service members and their families to obtain a license with the word "military" in place of the expiration date. A license with this designation does not have to be renewed for the duration of the service member's service.

CALIFORNIA

The license of a service member on active duty out of state is valid beyond its normal expiration date. The license is valid for up to 30 days following the date on which the service member is honorably separated from such service or returns to California, unless the license has been suspended, cancelled, or revoked. The license is valid only when the service member, while driving, has it and his or her discharge or separation papers in his or her immediate possession (Cal. Veh. Code § 12817).

GEORGIA

Georgia allows a six-month grace period for a service member whose driver's license expires while he or she is on active duty outside the state. The grace period is not added to the expiration date on a service member's driver's license. A service members may drive in Georgia on an expired license for six months after the date he or she is

service member's dependents.) After 60 days, the person must have a valid New York license in order to drive in the state (NY Veh. & Traf. Law § 251).

VIRGINIA

A service member who is temporarily assigned to duty out of state, or the spouse or dependent of the member, may apply for a military extension of his or her driver's license by mail. The extension is valid for up to five years.

Normally, drivers who are out of state have 60 days from their return to renew their vehicle registration. The law gives service members a 90-day grace period, beginning on the date they are no longer serving outside the United States, to comply with the vehicle registration laws. To qualify, the vehicle must be operated by the service member only while possessing (1) orders or other military documentation demonstrating that he or she is entitled to the grace period and (2) the most recent DMV registration card.

Service members, for purposes of the registration provision, include members on active-duty service with the armed forces, National Guard, or other reserves (Va. Code Ann. § 46.2-221.2).

WASHINGTON

Washington issues a license to service members and their families with the word "military" in place of the expiration date. These individuals do not have to renew their driver's licenses for the length of the member's military service. The license is available to members of the active duty armed forces and members of the National Guard and reserves who are called to duty for 180 days or more, and their spouses, domestic partners, and dependents.

The license is valid until 90 days after the service member is honorably discharged, unless it is suspended, cancelled, or revoke before then. A license issued to a reservist called to active duty and his or her spouse or dependent is only in effect while the reservist is on active duty.

An ordinary driver's license held by a member of the military remains in effect under the same conditions as a "military" license, even after the expiration date has passed. But, getting a license with "military" on it ensures that DMV will keep a record of the license for the entire length of military service, and make it easier for private businesses and government officials to determine that the license is valid (Wash. Rev. Code § 46.20.027).

KM: df/sd



Gary E Waterhouse
Legislative Chair & Judge Advocate
3rd District Veterans of Foreign Wars
February 25, 2010
Select Committee on Veterans Affairs Public Hearing

S.B. No. 215 (RAISED) AN ACT CONCERNING TUITION WAIVERS FOR VETERANS.

The changes to the statute proposed in this bill are well received by the veteran community and address and issue that are offensive to the sense of honor of the veteran's community. We support the language "service in time of war" shall not include time spent in training or in attendance at a military service academy.

H.B. No. 5261 (RAISED) AN ACT CONCERNING FALSE REPRESENTATION OF MILITARY STATUS.

No veteran can abide a person wearing uniforms and medals they did not earn, especially if they are used to gain celebrity or political office. There is concern in the veteran community that DD214s are often incomplete and do not reflect awards and badges duly and properly awarded. We believe there must be a clear malice aforethought for the wearing of military metals or rank to rise to the level of a crime. I have personally viewed DD214s that did not show a Purple Heart award, yet the veteran has a signed Purple Heart certificate dated after his DD214.

H.B. No. 5262 (RAISED) AN ACT CONCERNING DEATH CERTIFICATE FEES FOR VETERANS.

The veteran's community supports the proposal; "To waive the fee for a death certificate when the deceased was a veteran and the person requesting the certificate is an immediate family member." The courtesy is a simple recognition of the value our country places in veterans, and our respect for military families.

H.B. No. 5265 (RAISED) AN ACT CONCERNING THE EXPIRATION OF DRIVER'S LICENSES ISSUED TO MEMBERS OF THE ARMED FORCES.

The veteran's community supports this bill as a courtesy to service members who has been out of the country on military orders, the bill provides a reasonable time frame to renew the license.