

PA 11-017

HB6319

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**JOINT  
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**EDUCATION  
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Coleman.

DEPUTY COMMISSIONER GEORGE A. COLEMAN: First of all I want to say, good morning. And I'm happy to know that 55 is just the beginning of getting old, so that I still have a lot more flexibility here in terms of what I can look forward to.

I think that it's particularly a pleasure to talk to you this morning. We all get a sense that there are lots of innovations that are expected in education, a lot of adjustments in order to meet the budgetary conditions of our time.

And our big challenge is how do we preserve that which is good? How do we weed out those things that might not be serving us? And how do we continue to make sure that Connecticut students are among the most competitive in the country? So I think that's all -- that's our big charge that we're going to have to be working together towards the foreseeable future in order to make that happen.

So I'm very privileged to comment on some bills, particularly those that we are supportive of. We've provided written testimony and I'm looking forward to whatever questions you might have to better explore or give advice relative to how we might proceed based upon our understandings today.

I want to start by looking at or commenting on Raised Bill 930. Of course, that is a bill concerning school entry age. A part of what we've been charged with as the State is to reduce the achievement gap.

A great deal of the achievement gap is represented in an initial start gap for many

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the bill, we want to make sure that the Legislature anticipates that what is needed is really an electronic system for being able -- for our two agencies to interact with each other.

In the State Department of Education alone, we receive over 30,000 certification applications. And to be able to make these matches effectively, that kind of assistance would be needed in order to carry out that task. We do embrace the task and know that that kind of investment in the electronic capability between our two agencies is important.

We certainly support Raised Bill 6319. And this recognizes the amazing contribution that our war veterans, in this case, our Korean War veterans have made, and enable the awarding of a high school diploma to those individuals who have served our country and who, for whatever reasons, education might have been interrupted and not have allowed them to accomplish that.

There are precious few of these -- of this generation left, and that this distinction of a high school diploma is very, I think, consistent both with the lessons that they have learned and all that they have taught generations subsequently that are consistent with that distinction.

Raised Bill 6325, AN ACT CONCERNING JUVENILE ENTRY -- REENTRY AND EDUCATION. The State Department of Education -- we support that bill, House Bill Number 6325, to require immediate enrollment of students who transfer from Unified School District Number 1 and Unified School District Number 2, to amend notification laws regarding student transfers from these schools and to amend the time

transportation challenges. I would like to think that other regional areas of the state can come together and address their challenges as well.

So I applaud the foresight of the folks from Southeastern Connecticut who have worked hard along with the RESC, et cetera, in developing that calendar. And I think it's something that, not just parents, but certainly teachers and municipalities would appreciate for us to assist in helping to develop those calendars.

So thank you, commissioner.

Thank you Mr. Chairman.

REP. FLEISCHMANN: Thank you.

Representative Atkinson.

REP. ACKERT: Thank you, Chairman.

And thank you, Commissioner.

Just a quick question, house Bill 6319 regarding the Korean War veterans to be added to that bill. Would -- and that's a nice gesture for -- on our part and this committee's part.

The average age of that person is 72. I've started -- apologize for bringing up ages, but would it be more -- make more sense if we kind of included newer, you know, combat-era, Vietnam, Grenada, Afghanistan and Iraq? Some of those?

I think they could be of more value to them to provide them with the opportunity to receive the same consideration.

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11:00 A.M.

DEPUTY COMMISSIONER GEORGE A. COLEMAN: We would not object to that.

REP. ACKERT: Thank you.

REP. FLEISCHMANN: Thank you.

And just to be clear, it's -- the commissioner might not object but the chairs of the committee would, because the -- this was aimed at veterans who served the country who we would be recognizing. And we realized that it would not send a message that, in fact, that they have high school diploma that could be used in the labor market.

For someone who is a far younger veteran, to grant them a high school diploma without any evidence that they are having create -- having completed the requirements that one completes in order to have a GED or high school diploma would confuse the labor markets. And that's the reason that bills of that sort have never made it through the assembly previously.

Other questions or comments from members of the committee?

Representative Davis.

REP. DAVIS: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. And good afternoon.

Just a comment and a follow-up on 929, on school nurses. The proposed language requires a national board certification of school nurses to be included as part of the qualifications. In your testimony however, you indicated that you had to serve as a school nurse for five years prior to receiving that certification, or as part of the qualifications for that certification.

Senator Kissel.

SENATOR KISSEL: Chairman Stillman, Chairman Fleischmann, esteemed members of the Education Committee, thank you. I'm State Senator John Kissel, serving the people of Enfield, Somers, Suffield, Windsor, Windsor Locks, East Granby and Granby. And I'm here to speak on two meals, and neither of these bills will entail any cost to the people of the state of Connecticut.

The first bill that I'm speaking in favor of is Raised Bill Number 6319, AN ACT CONCERNING HIGH SCHOOL DIPLOMAS FOR KOREAN WAR VETERANS. It's my understanding that this bill probably has been kicking around for the last couple of years, but it came to my attention in the last year because I attended several of the award ceremonies put on by our former Secretary of State Susan Bysiewicz on honoring Korean War veterans.

And indeed, the one in Enfield, there's so many Korean War veterans still in Enfield that we had to split it into two separate ceremonies in excess of a hundred folks.

And as part of one of the ceremonies I will say one of my constituents, Robert Greiner said, you know what you can do for us above and beyond this? They honor World War II vets by allowing towns to give out diplomas. And it would be really nice if you could do that for us.

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It's my understanding -- I was observing this committee's actions earlier in the day and I believe it was Chairman Fleischmann had indicated that these kinds of proposals need to have a certain period of time so that potential employers would not get misled by

someone coming in with essentially a GED or a high school equivalency degree.

But my dad, John Charles Kissel, God bless his soul -- still healthy with my mom, he's 77 years old. He served in Korea. So these folks are in their seventies primarily. And I think it's a great way to allow towns, if they should desire, to so honor them and I think it's time is now. So I would urge the members of this committee and the cochairs to support that proposal.

The second bill I speak in favor of is Raised Bill 933, AN ACT CONCERNING SUBSTITUTE TEACHERS. I will admit that in past years this hasn't had an awful lot of success, but while the State has an extremely laudable goal of requiring bachelor's degrees to be the criterion to be a substitute teacher here in the State of Connecticut, there's an awful folks that have come up to me over the last few years from North-central Connecticut. They had spent probably over a decade being substitute teachers. They may have associate's degree. They've proven themselves in the classroom year after year after year and they've indicated, why are we somehow not being grandfathered in this process? Why are we being pushed out?

And so what this particular proposal does, and I think it sets a good criterion, in that it would be upon special request of the superintendent of schools to get a waiver from the department for a particular instance.

Not only would that address an instance such as I have encountered in the town of Enfield where there's someone that has a storied past as a substitute teacher, but I think it would also be very helpful for some of the smaller

communities in Connecticut that just might be scrambling just to find people that can actually do this role.

And I'd be more than happy to answer any questions on either of these two bills.

REP. FLEISCHMANN: Thank you for your good testimony and for listening to what went before your testimony.

I just want to say this bill is before us because we recognize that Korean War veterans are of an age where it would be an honor for them to receive these honorary diplomas, but it wouldn't necessarily have an impact on the labor markets.

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My father-in-law is a Korean War veteran who has a few years of your dad. I get that and that the concern was raised when it comes to much more recent conflicts, but I share your feelings about this bill a hundred percent.

Are there comments or questions from members of the committee?

Senator Stillman.

SENATOR STILLMAN: Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Good to see you, Senator. Thank you for your remarks and support today. I attended, shortly after we passed the bill allowing World War II vets to receive their high school diploma, that year my -- the high school in Waterford did honor two people that came forward that had not been here to receive their diplomas. And it was very touching.

The students were overwhelmed -- the ones that were graduating -- that they were overwhelmed

because it was so meaningful to those two gentlemen who received their diplomas.

And really, I think it's a great teaching tool for our kids, too, as they, you know, as they graduate from high school. And I think it makes a great impression on them as to how important their high school diploma is.

So this is a bill whose time has come. Maybe it's -- we should have done it sooner, but it's never too late to recognize people's achievements. And so I'm -- I appreciate your support for the bill as well.

SENATOR KISSEL: I thank you so much, Madam Chair -- and both of you. I'm going to walk away from this public hearing feeling very, very positive about this particular proposal.

And indeed, in preparation for honoring the Korean War vets with the Secretary of State I did some -- brushed up on some of my history. And there's a lot of that history I wasn't aware of and I have a degree in history. So I think that what you state is well taken.

REP. FLEISCHMANN: Any other questions? If not, thank you, Senator.

SENATOR KISSEL: Thank you. Have a wonderful afternoon.

REP. FLEISCHMANN: Next up is Principal Gail Dahling-Hench to be followed by Senator Steve Cassano.

GAIL DAHLING-HENCH: Good afternoon and thank you for welcoming us back.

My name is Gail Dahling-Hench. I'm principal of Pine Grove School in Avon, Connecticut. We

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Education Committee  
February 23, 2011

TESTIMONY OF

GEORGE A. COLEMAN, ACTING COMMISSIONER OF EDUCATION

ON

RAISED BILLS 930, 6326, 6319, 6325, 6385, 932, 929, 6318

RAISED BILL 930: AN ACT CONCERNING THE SCHOOL ENTRANCE AGE

The State Department of Education (CSDE) supports S.B. No. 930, *AAC The School Entrance Age*, to change the school entrance age requirement, beginning in the school year commencing July 1, 2012, from January first to October first, and to delete the provision allowing parents to withhold enrolling their child in kindergarten until the child is seven years old.

Currently students between the ages of 4 ½ and 7 years old may be enrolled in the same Kindergarten class. Such a wide developmental range makes it challenging to the instructional needs of all children and likely has a negative impact on achievement.

In addition, CT is one of only four states (California, Connecticut, Michigan, Vermont), and the District of Columbia and the Virgin Islands that have cut-off dates between December 1 and January 1. Thirty-five states and Puerto Rico have kindergarten entrance cut-off dates between August 31 and October 16. This bill would result in a policy more consistent with other states.

In order to ensure that the neediest students in our state who would no longer be eligible to enroll in kindergarten under this bill have access to preschool, the CSDE recommends an ongoing additional investment of funding for providing preschool opportunities through an expansion of School Readiness funding to 4-year-olds in the 19 current and former priority school districts.

With that said, CSDE supports S.B. No. 930, with an increase in school readiness funds for those students in priority school districts who are 5 years of age between October 1 and January 1 (approximately 3300 students a year) that will no longer be eligible to enroll in kindergarten.

RAISED BILL 6326: AN ACT CONCERNING THE RESPONSE OF SCHOOL DISTRICTS AND THE DEPARTMENTS OF EDUCATION AND CHILDREN AND FAMILIES TO REPORTS OF CHILD ABUSE AND NEGLECT

The State Department of Education (CSDE) strongly supports H.B. No. 6326, *AAC The Response of School Districts and the Departments of Education and Children and Families to Reports of Child Abuse and Neglect*, to improve the sharing of information relating to reports of child abuse and neglect by school employees between the Departments of Children and Families and Education and school districts, with minor technical changes.

The bill codifies the recommendations from a report of the Attorney General and Child Advocate entitled "*Protecting Our Children: Improving Protections for Children When Allegations are Made that*

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*School System Personnel Abused and/or Neglected Children*" dated July 8, 2010 concerning investigations of reports of child abuse and neglect in schools.

With that said, while CSDE adamantly supports completing a Child Abuse Registry check for all applicants for certification as outlined in this bill, it can only support this requirement if the Registry check can be completed electronically, as CSDE receives over 30,000 certification applications annually.

In light of the above, CSDE supports H.B. No. 6326 to improve protections for Connecticut's children by improving the information sharing relating to reports of child abuse and neglect by school employees between the Department of Children and Families, CSDE and school districts.

**RAISED BILL 6319: AN ACT CONCERNING HIGH SCHOOL DIPLOMAS FOR KOREAN WAR VETERANS**

The State Department of Education (CSDE) supports H.B. No. 6319, AAC High School Diplomas for Korean War Veterans, to allow boards of education to award high school diplomas to veterans of the Korean War who left school early to enlist in the armed forces in service to their country.

Many of the men and women who served in the Korean conflict are approaching or are in their 80's. It would be a fitting tribute of their sacrifice by permitting a local board of education to honor their service with the award of a high school diploma. These individuals postponed a critical period of their educational experience in order to give service to our country. In fact if one were to review their specific training within the military it would correspond with courses allowed for secondary school credit.

Therefore, CSDE supports H.B. No. 6319, AAC High School Diplomas for Korean War Veterans because it will provide a deserved acknowledgment of individuals who gave a tremendous sacrifice in the service of their country.

**RAISED BILL 6325: AN ACT CONCERNING JUVENILE REENTRY AND EDUCATION**

The State Department of Education (CSDE) supports H.B. No. 6325, AAC Juvenile Reentry and Education, to require immediate enrollment of students who transfer from Unified School District #1 and Unified School District #2, to amend notification laws regarding student transfers from Unified School District #1 and Unified School District #2, and to amend the time requirements for expelled students seeking to reenter their previous school, with some suggested revisions.

For Section 1(e), CSDE recommends that the section begin with "Notwithstanding any other provisions of the statutes to the contrary..." as CSDE has concerns that schools could reassign these returning students under the provisions of Section 10-233k(a) where it identifies that the district can modify a child's educational plan or placement.

In addition, CSDE supports the concept that children, who have been placed at a detention center, Connecticut Juvenile Training School (CJTS), or a residential placement after having committed an expelled offense, should be allowed to return to public school once they are discharged. CSDE believes the proposed language does not adequately distinguish between the types of placements children are

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**2011**



STATE OF CONNECTICUT  
OFFICE OF POLICY AND MANAGEMENT

EDUCATION COMMITTEE  
WEDNESDAY, FEBRUARY 23, 2011

S.B. No. 930 (RAISED) AN ACT CONCERNING THE SCHOOL ENTRANCE AGE.

Recommend approval of the bill as written. The bill would change kindergarten age beginning 7/1/12 so that much younger (4 year olds) and older (7 year olds) would not be starting school at the same time. Right now schools have a tough time teaching kids who can range in age from 4.5 to 7 years. SDE would like additional School Readiness funding for students in poorest communities so they could get the additional preschool year in this transition period. Since there is no recommended funding for this we should oppose this if it is added to the bill!

H.B. No. 6326 (RAISED) AN ACT CONCERNING THE RESPONSE OF SCHOOL DISTRICTS AND THE DEPARTMENTS OF EDUCATION AND CHILDREN AND FAMILIES TO REPORTS OF CHILD ABUSE AND NEGLECT.

This is the right thing to do school personnel, including prospective teachers, should be vetted to make sure they do not have a history of abusing children. For administrative flexibility both from the local school district and State Department of Education perspective inquiries to the Child Abuse Registry should be available electronically. If they are not, the bill's implementation should be tied to availability of electronic data sharing.

S.B. No. 933 (RAISED) AN ACT CONCERNING SUBSTITUTE TEACHERS.

This allows a superintendent of local schools to request that the bachelor's degree requirement for substitute teachers be waived. SDE is fine with this if limited. Neutral for OPM; no fiscal impact expected.

H.B. No. 6319 (RAISED) AN ACT CONCERNING HIGH SCHOOL DIPLOMAS FOR KOREAN WAR VETERANS.

There are Korean War veterans who left high school to serve their country. As we have done for similar groups of World War II veterans, it seems a fitting tribute to allow a local board of education to award these folks their high school diplomas (albeit sixty years later).

H.B. No. 6324 (RAISED) AN ACT CONCERNING TEACHER EMPLOYMENT CRITERIA.

This bill would require, for school districts which do not have layoff provisions in their contracts, to develop layoff procedures which do not put seniority as the primary reason for determining who gets retained and who gets laid off. While this appears to

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(Chamber at ease.)

Deputy Speaker Aresimowicz in the Chair.

DEPUTY SPEAKER ARESIMOWICZ:

Will the Clerk please call Calendar Number 79.

THE CLERK:

On page 32, Calendar 79, House Bill Number 6319, AN  
ACT CONCERNING HIGH SCHOOL DIPLOMAS FOR KOREAN WAR  
VETERANS, favorable report of the Committee on Public  
Safety.

DEPUTY SPEAKER ARESIMOWICZ:

The Honorable Representative of the 18th,  
Representative Fleischmann.

REP. FLEISCHMANN (18th):

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. And it's a pleasure to see  
you up there, Mr. Speaker.

I move acceptance of the joint committee's favorable  
report and passage of the bill.

DEPUTY SPEAKER ARESIMOWICZ:

The question is on acceptance of the joint  
committee's report and passage of the bill.

Representative Fleischmann, you have the floor.

REP. FLEISCHMANN (18th):

Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

The measure before us would allow boards of education to grant high school diplomas to veterans of the Korean War, as we did just a few ago for World War II veterans. This issue was brought to my attention by Representative David Kiner of Enfield. You know, people who served this nation bravely during the Korean conflict often had to interrupt their high school careers in order to do so and some of them never received those high school diplomas. They are now in their late 70s and early 80s.

This seems to be an all together fitting honor and it's an educational opportunity, because at those graduation ceremonies, there are going to be 17 and 18 individuals who are going to get to see brave men and women who served this country receive these diplomas so I hope that the entire chamber will join me in supporting this good measure.

DEPUTY SPEAKER ARESIMOWICZ:

Thank you very much, Representative.

Will you remark further on the bill?

Representative Kiner of the 59th.

REP. KINER (59th):

Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Mr. Speaker, I rise in strong support of this

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legislation today. The idea for the legislation came to my attention from a constituent of mine who was presented with an honorary degree in Michigan and shared just a heartfelt story of when he received his diploma. As I recall, he told me of how his mother, who lived in another state, surprised him by being in the audience. After hearing this story, I felt compelled to introduce the bill. This bill is a great way to honor our veterans and I thank the chair of the Education Committee for bringing out the bill and I urge my colleagues to support it.

Thank you.

DEPUTY SPEAKER ARESIMOWICZ:

Thank you very much, sir.

Representative Guiliano of the 23rd.

REP. GUILIANO (23rd):

Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Mr. Speaker, this afternoon I would like to align my comments with those of my colleagues here in the House. This bill does offer a rather unique opportunity to some rather unique individuals, those of who are on in years, but at a very critical point in their young lives, stepped forward to give up their own opportunities and serve their country. I urge our unanimous support of this very worthy measure.

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Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

DEPUTY SPEAKER ARESIMOWICZ:

Thank you very much, madam.

Representative Kirkley-Bey.

REP. KIRKLEY-BEY (5th):

Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

A question through you to Representative  
Fleischmann.

DEPUTY SPEAKER ARESIMOWICZ:

Representative Fleischmann, please prepare  
yourself.

REP. KIRKLEY-BEY (5th):

Do you remember when we did this for World War II  
veterans if we also include Vietnam veterans?

DEPUTY SPEAKER ARESIMOWICZ:

Representative Fleischmann.

REP. FLEISCHMANN (18th):

Through you, Mr. Speaker, the previous legislation  
we enacted only covered World War II veterans. Through  
you, Mr. Speaker.

REP. KIRKLEY-BEY (5th):

So then we would have to come back and do Vietnam  
veterans. The reason I ask that is my uncle is 96. He's  
one of the last remaining members of the my family who

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served in World War II and I supported -- wholeheartedly support this. I have two cousins who served in Korea so I would urge our colleagues to please support this and if we have to bring in Vietnam next time.

DEPUTY SPEAKER ARESIMOWICZ:

Thank you very much, madam.

Representative Thompson of the 13th.

REP. THOMPSON (13th):

Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Mr. Speaker, many years ago, too many to really relate in detail this afternoon, but going back to 1950, just out of high school, I enlisted in the United States Marine Corp and went through boot camp, Camp Pendleton in Oceanside and joined the First Marine Division in the spring of '51 during the Korean war. Came home and they released a number of us at that time because our duty was done and we could go home to serve in an inactive reserve, but it was a -- a telling period in my life. I was fortunate enough to have the GI Bill when I was just turning 20 and went off to college.

And so many of my comrades in the division were young kids out of the south, across the country and so many were called in through reserve units and I imagine many of them are still alive today, as I am, and would look forward to

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using this benefit and had earned. So I urge my fellow members to vote for the bill and restore a part of their lives that they didn't experience earlier because of a war. Thank you.

DEPUTY SPEAKER ARESIMOWICZ:

Thank you very much for your comments and your service, sir.

Representative Adinolfi of the 103rd.

REP. ADINOLFI (103rd):

Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

This is a good bill. I'm Korean War veteran myself. I know a lot of Korean veterans that were in there with me and got out and got discharge, and served in the reserves also and I think they've earned this -- what this bill provides for them and I encourage everyone to vote for it.

Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker.

DEPUTY SPEAKER ARESIMOWICZ:

Again, thank you for your comments and your service, sir.

Representative Sawyer of the 55th.

REP. SAWYER (55th):

Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

I would like to echo the remarks of Representative Kirkley-Bey. The average age of the Vietnam veterans now

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is about 65 and they have a service record that we did not honor at that time. We were exceedingly disrespectful to those members who had come back from that war so I would say to this chamber as we look forward, passing this bill along because I think it is an -- the absolutely right thing to do that in a subsequent year that we look at the next conflict.

Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

DEPUTY SPEAKER ARESIMOWICZ:

Thank you very much, madam.

Representative Srinivasan of the 31st.

REP. SRINIVASAN (31st):

Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

I, too, rise in support of this bill. The Korean veterans have rendered to our country a service that we'll always be thankful, we'll always be grateful for and this our simple way of saying a thank you them. We can never say thank you in enough terms, but this is the least we could do for all that they have given to our country.

Thank you.

DEPUTY SPEAKER ARESIMOWICZ:

Thank you very much, sir.

Representative Coutu of the 47th.

REP. COUTU (47th):

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Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

I just want to say that many view the Korean War as a forgotten war. The World War II war, the Vietnam War, many of us know about that and a lot of times they feel they're forgotten so I think it's really important for those Korean veterans to know, the ones that didn't complete high school because they were sent to foreign lands, that we appreciate them, we appreciate their sacrifice and all the good things that we've gained from what they did for our country.

So thank you, Mr. Speaker, for this piece of legislation and thank you to our Veterans' Committee for recognizing these great men and women who served many years ago and I think the average age is probably closer to 75 for most Korean Veterans. Thank you.

DEPUTY SPEAKER ARESIMOWICZ:

Thank you very much, sir.

Will you remark further? Will you remark further?

If not, will staff and guests please come to the well of the House, members of 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 by roll call.

Members to the chamber, please.

Deputy Speaker Godfrey in the Chair.

DEPUTY SPEAKER GODFREY:

Have all the members voted? Have all the members voted? If so, the machine will be locked. The Clerk will take a tally and the Clerk will announce the tally.

THE CLERK:

House Bill 6319.

Total Number voting 144

Necessary for adoption 73

Those voting Yea 144

Those voting nay 0

Those absent and not voting 6

DEPUTY SPEAKER GODFREY:

The bill is passed.

Are there any introductions?

The Distinguished Republican Leader Representative Cafero.

REP. CAFERO (142nd):

Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Ladies and gentleman of the chamber, we take some time on occasion to recognize members of our capitol family and

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those who come to Connecticut for the excellent educational opportunities. So what this bill attempts to do, in a very crafty way, is to match up the opportunities with the resources, meaning the people who can really make these companies, younger companies fly in -- in the State of Connecticut, be a great -- of great benefit to the State of Connecticut, ultimately.

Thank you, Madam President.

THE CHAIR:

Thank you, Senator.

Will you remark further?

Senator Bye.

SENATOR BYE:

Madam President, if there's no objection, I ask this be moved to the Consent Calendar.

THE CHAIR:

Seeing no objection, so ordered.

Mr. Clerk.

THE CLERK:

Madam President, returning to the Calendar, Calendar page 18, Calendar 338, House Bill

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Number 6319, AN ACT CONCERNING HIGH SCHOOL DIPLOMAS  
FOR KOREAN WAR VETS, Favorable Report of the Education  
Committee, and the Public Service Committee.

THE CHAIR:

Senator Stillman.

SENATOR STILLMAN:

Thank you, Madam President.

I move the Joint Committee's Favorable Report in  
concurrence with the House.

THE CHAIR:

Acting on approval of the bill, will you remark  
further?

SENATOR STILLMAN:

Yes.

THE CHAIR:

Senator Stillman.

SENATOR STILLMAN:

Thank you, very much.

This bill expands local and regional school  
board's authority to award high school diplomas to  
veterans who did not receive them because they left  
high school for military service, during the Korean  
War.

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We currently allow that for World War II veterans, and I know that in my town, in Waterford, we had a very moving ceremony around the time of the traditional high school graduation. And it was very interesting to see how touched the graduates were to see people that they think of as their grandparents or great-grandparents sitting there and really coming to tears because they finally received their high school diploma. It is such an important document for us to have and a measure of our level of education, that I believe this bill will have the same effect on the Korean War veterans as well.

And just to be clear, they -- they must have been honorably discharged and served actively from June 27, 1950, to October 27, 1953, in any of our Armed Forces, and I move its adoption.

THE CHAIR:

Thank you.

The motion is on adoption. Will you remark further?

Senator Boucher.

SENATOR BOUCHER:

Thank you, Madam -- Madam President.

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I rise to support the bill. Just as our World War II veterans are passing on, it's getting kind of late for us to be doing this, and it's absolutely appropriate. It's a great bill; it ought to be passed.

Thank you.

THE CHAIR:

Thank you, Senator.

Senator Kissel.

SENATOR KISSEL:

Thank you, very much, Madam President.

Take a little bit of credit with this particular bill; I know I put in proposed legislation for this, a Senate bill. My friend and colleague, Representative David Kiner, put in the proposal for the House bill, and he also sits on the Education Committee, and I know that he was a strong supporter of this proposal.

And I do recall going and testifying for the Education Committee, and I really want to thank the leadership of that committee, both the House Chair, Andrew Fleischmann, but in particular, Senator Stillman. She spoke articulately during the public hearing about the very moving experience she had when she was at a graduation ceremony where both the high

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school young people were with some World War II folks, and it was sort of like cross-pollination; they all learned from one another. And we hope that the same kind of experience can play itself out, should this bill be signed into law, regarding our Korean War veterans.

I will state for the record that there's one individual in particular, from Enfield, that deserves an awful lot of credit. We were at a Korean War veterans' ceremony with the previous Secretary of State, Susan Bysiewicz. And, Madam President, as you know, Enfield and the towns in north-central Connecticut are just fabulous veterans' towns, and there were so many Korean War veterans in the Town of Enfield for that ceremony that it had to be broken into two separate groups, two separate ceremonies. And it took place in the auditorium or Enfield High School, and these Korean War veterans and their family members filled up that auditorium for each particular ceremony.

And in the first wave of individuals we were honoring, myself, the Secretary of State, Mayor Scott Kaupin, and other members of our town council, a gentleman whom I had known for many, many years,

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Robert Grunert -- and, Bob, I hope you're listening right now, if not now, when this replays on CT-N, you stood up when we asked if you had anything you wanted to say, any recommendations for legislation or anything about serving in the Korean War. And he pointed out at that ceremony, at that time, that -- and, in fact, Chairman Gregory Stokes of the Board of Education was there. He said, listen, this law was passed for World War II veterans, what about us Korean War veterans that felt so motivated to serve our nation that we left high school and by the time we got back, life had overtaken us such that we were older, wiser, had bills to pay and -- and families to take care of and we never had a chance to go back? So, Bob Grunert, you put that bug in -- in my head. We stated at that time -- I stated at that time that I would make sure, and to the extent I could, that this became law.

I know that Chairman Gregory Stokes passed along his personal experience regarding family members to Representative Kiner, and so there really was a crystallization of support for this concept up in north-central Connecticut. But it really was Bob Grunert who got the ball rolling, and I give him a

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tremendous amount of credit. It really shows that one individual in our state can help get legislation passed.

But, again, it wouldn't come to reality this afternoon if it wasn't for the hard work and support of my friends and colleagues on the Education Committee, and to that extent, I really want to thank Senator Stillman for bringing this bill forward this afternoon.

Thank you, Madam President.

THE CHAIR:

Thank you, Senator.

Senator McLachlan.

SENATOR McLACHLAN:

Thank you, Madam President.

I stand to support this bill. I was very pleased to cosponsor it, and I want to thank the proponents of this legislation for bringing it forward.

The City of Danbury is home to one of the most dynamic Korean War veterans' organizations in the State of Connecticut. And I personally know a couple of Korean War veterans who will be affected by this bill. I think it's a good way for the State of Connecticut to acknowledge their service. Entering

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war service at such a young age and then returning from war to the quiet life of trying to make a living and raise a family, this bill recognizes their service but it also acknowledges that the challenges they faced when they returned home perhaps did not give them the opportunity to seek more education.

So I want to thank you, our colleagues, the proponents of this bill for bringing it forward, and I hope all will support it.

Thank you, Madam President.

THE CHAIR:

Thank you, Senator.

Senator Cassano.

SENATOR CASSANO:

Thank you, Madam President.

I, too, support this bill. It's -- it's long overdue.

But I'd also like to make a suggestion. We recognize those veterans from World War II and then the Korean War, but I think we missed the boat in part of the process here. I had the opportunity to teach for 28 years at the community college, Manchester. The community colleges are probably the greatest

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cross-section of students that you can get in Connecticut.

I can't tell you how many women have come back to college today and in the last 20 years that were a part of World War II in a different way. They dropped out of high school so they could work in the factories and do the things that were necessary to keep America going while their brothers and their fathers and others fought in World War II. And I would suggest and ask the Education Committee to perhaps consider doing the same thing.

We see, in fact, on my refrigerator, I have a little Rosie the Riveter tag that my daughter has had, we can, "We can do it." Well, I think we should be recognizing those women that made that sacrifice in World War II so that we could have the materials, the food, the home front that was safe because of what they did.

Thank you.

THE CHAIR:

Thank you, Senator.

Will you remark further?

Senator Kissel, for the --

SENATOR KISSEL:

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Thank you.

THE CHAIR:

-- second time.

SENATOR KISSEL:

Thank you, Madam President. Sorry, for the second time.

I actually think that Senator Cassano is onto something there, and I think that that's something worth pursuing.

But I also wanted to make sure that I mention Senator Toni Boucher, too. She knew that this was a very important bill for -- for myself and our district, and she kept an eye on it. And it would be remiss of me if I didn't compliment her hard work as well.

Thank you, Madam President.

THE CHAIR:

Thank you, Senator.

Will you remark? Will you remark?

Senator Stillman.

SENATOR STILLMAN:

Thank you, Madam President.

If there is no objection, I'd like to ask to place this on the Consent Calendar.

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THE CHAIR:

Seeing no objection, so ordered.

For the -- at this moment, we take a -- a point of personal privilege, and Senator McLachlan.

SENATOR McLACHLAN:

Thank you, Madam President.

I'm proud to rise for a point of personal privilege.

THE CHAIR:

Please proceed, sir.

SENATOR McLACHLAN:

Thank you, Madam President.

Dear Senators, I'm very proud to introduce to you a group from St. Gregory the Great School, in Danbury, one of Connecticut's blue ribbon schools. The 4th grade class of Mrs. Smith has been studying Connecticut government for the last several weeks, and today is their opportunity to visit the Capitol for a tour. They had a little pizza lunch, and, unfortunately, I was unable to attend the lunch; I hope it was good. But they are learning all about what we do here, and I hope you'll join me in welcoming the 4th grade class from St. Gregory the Great School, in Danbury.

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Madam President, have an additional item to add to the Consent Calendar, that is Calendar page 17, Calendar 318, Senate Bill 152.

THE CHAIR:

Without objection, so ordered.

SENATOR LOONEY:

And thank you, Madam President.

Madam President, if the Clerk might now call the Second Consent Calendar.

THE CHAIR:

Mr. Clerk.

THE CLERK:

Madam President, the Second Consent Calendar starts on page 7. It's Calendar Number 104, House Bill 6371.

And then we go to page 9, Calendar Number 187, Senate Bill Number 1053; page 12, Calendar Number 240, Senate Bill 1100; Calendar page 17, Calendar 318, Senate Bill 152; Calendar page 18, Calendar 338, House Bill 6319; Calendar page 37, Calendar 90, Senate Bill 464; Calendar page 43, Calendar 197, Senate Bill 1021; Calendar page 46, Calendar 251, Senate Bill 799.

That completes the Second Consent Calendar.

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THE CHAIR:

Thank you, Mr. Clerk.

If you will announce the pendency of a vote on the Consent Calendar, sir.

THE CLERK:

The Senate is voting by roll call on the Second Consent Calendar. Will all Senators please return to the Chamber. The Senate is voting by roll call on the Second Consent Calendar. Will all Senators please return to the Chamber.

THE CHAIR:

The machine will be opened.

THE CLERK:

The Senate is voting by roll call on the Second Consent Calendar. Will all Senators please return to the Chamber.

THE CHAIR:

The machine is now open, if the Senators will kindly record your vote.

If all the members have voted, the machine will be locked and the Clerk will kindly announce the tally.

THE CLERK:

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Total number voting	36
Those voting Yea	36
Those voting Nay	0
Absent and not voting	0

THE CHAIR:

Consent Calendar -- the Second Consent Calendar  
is now adopted.

Thank you, Mr. Clerk.

Senator Looney, you have the floor, sir.

SENATOR LOONEY:

Thank you, Madam President.

Madam President, that will conclude our business  
for -- for today's session.

I just wanted to announce that there will be a  
Democratic caucus immediately upon conclusion of the  
session and that it's our intention to convene  
tomorrow at noon there, as I will yield the floor for  
members, for purposes of announcements of committee  
meetings or points of personal privilege.

THE CHAIR:

Are there any announcements or points of personal  
privilege at this time?