

PA 11-003

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GENERAL ASSEMBLY
HOUSE**

**PROCEEDINGS
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Mr. Clerk, please announce the tally.

THE CLERK:

House Bill 6297 as amended by House "A."

Total Number voting	146
Necessary for adoption	74
Those voting Yea	146
Those voting Nay	0
Those absent and not voting	4

DEPUTY SPEAKER GODFREY:

The bill, as amended, is passed.

Mr. Clerk, kindly call Calendar 182.

THE CLERK:

On page 17, Calendar 182, Substitute for House Bill Number 5956, AN ACT CONCERNING THE INTERNET WEBSITE OF THE DEPARTMENT OF VETERANS AFFAIRS, favorable report of the Committee on Public Safety and Security.

DEPUTY SPEAKER GODFREY:

The distinguished chairman of the Veterans' Affair Committee, Representative Hennessey.

REP. HENNESSEY (127th):

Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

DEPUTY SPEAKER GODFREY:

Question is on acceptance and passage.

Will you explain the bill, please, sir.

REP. HENNESSEY (127th):

Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Mr. Speaker, what this bill does is provide a one-stop shopping for our veterans when they're looking for information regarding state and federal services that they can avail themselves. Mr. Speaker, even the best of veteran advocates have trouble finding out all the different things that state and federal government has to offer so this bill requires the Department of Veteran Affairs to publish an informational page on its Internet website and maintain it. This information provides eligibility requirements, application processes and contact information.

Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

DEPUTY SPEAKER GODFREY:

Thank you, sir.

The distinguished ranking member of the Veterans' Affairs Committee, Representative Adinolfi.

REP. ALDINOLFI (103rd):

Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

This bill is a great bill. This bill will make available to veterans' families, widowers and widows of

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veterans who have passed away and remaining family members of what -- what is available in the way of benefits for veterans and how to go about receiving them and getting them. It's a good bill. It's an important bill. Veterans need it. Their families need it and I urge support.

Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker.

DEPUTY SPEAKER GODFREY:

Thank you, sir.

The gentleman from Bristol, Representative Nicastro.

REP. NICASTRO (79th):

Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

I rise in strong support of this bill. Mr. Speaker, when our veterans come home from Iraq, Afghanistan or whatever the case may be, they are given instructions on how they contact but right at that point in time, they're really not listening, not because they don't care, they're just excited about getting home, and then, you know, we're getting the phone calls. This website will tell everything from A to Z not only for our returning veterans, but all veterans who have served and veterans who have been honorably discharged, what benefits are available, how they can contact them, what numbers to call, et cetera.

I strongly support this and I urge my colleagues to

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support this bill. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

DEPUTY SPEAKER GODFREY:

Thank you, sir.

Will you remark further on the bill? Will you remark further on the bill?

If not, staff and guests please come to the well of the House, members take your seat. 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:

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.

Please announce the tally, Mr. Clerk.

THE CLERK:

House Bill 5956.

Total Number voting 143

Necessary for adoption 72

Those voting Yea 143

Those voting Nay 0

Those absent and not voting 7

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DEPUTY SPEAKER GODFREY:

The bill is passed.

Speaker Donovan in the Chair.

SPEAKER DONOVAN:

Representative Godfrey.

REP. GODFREY (110th):

Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Mr. Speaker, I move for the suspension of the rules for the immediate consideration of House Resolution 107.

SPEAKER DONOVAN:

Question before the chamber is the suspension of the rules for immediate consideration of House Joint Resolution 107.

Is there any objection? Is there any objection?

Hearing none, the rules are suspended for that purpose.

I would ask that staff and guests please come to the well of the House. Members take their seats. We're about to take up a resolution, resolution expressing sympathy on the death of a former member of the House.

Will the Clerk please call and read House Joint Resolution 107.

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Thank you, Madam President. Moving now, Madam President, to calendar page 26, Calendar 333, House Bill Number 5956, Madam President, move to place this item on the consent calendar.

THE CHAIR:

So ordered.

SENATOR LOONEY:

Thank you, Madam President.

Continuing calendar page 26, Calendar 335, House Bill Number 6545, Madam President, move to place that item on the consent calendar.

THE CHAIR:

So ordered.

SENATOR LOONEY:

Thank you, Madam President.

And that concludes our consent calendar markings at this time.

THE CHAIR:

Thank you, Senator.

At this time, I ask if anybody would like a point of personal privilege.

Senator Kane.

That's two for you today, sir. Okay. Popular man today.

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at this time.

THE CLERK:

Madam President, I failed to notice on the bottom of page 1, Calendar Number 37, Senate Joint Resolution Number 40. And then I'll repeat on the top page 2, Calendar Number 383, Senate joint Resolution Number 41. And on page --

I believe that's all I have as of this point.

THE CHAIR:

No. All of them on page 3, if you might run through them, Mr. Clerk.

THE CLERK:

Okay. This is my first time doing this.

THE CHAIR:

Well, welcome to my world and you're doing a great job.

THE CLERK:

Okay. I understand now.

On page 3, Calendar Number 52, Senate Bill Number 853; on page 7, Calendar Number 107, substitute for Senate Bill Number 1025; on page 7, Calendar Number 117, Senate Bill Number 883; on page 10, Calendar Number 161, Substitute for Senate Bill Number 462; on page 12, on the bottom of the page,

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Calendar Number 182, Substitute for Senate bill Number 368; on page 13, Calendar Number 188, Substitute for Senate Bill Number 1092; on page 18, the bottom of the page, Calendar Number 252, Substitute for Senate Bill Number 367; on page 25, Calendar Number 329, House Bill Number 6278; on page 26, Calendar Number 333, Substitute for House Bill Number 5956; also on page 26, Calendar Number 335, House Bill Number 6545; on page 37, near the top, Calendar Number 90, Senate Bill Number 464. And I believe those are all the markings that I have for the first consent calendar.

THE CHAIR:

Thank you. Senator Looney.

SENATOR LOONEY:

Thank you, Madam President. Just to delete one item from the consent calendar, that last numerated item should not be on the consent under. That's calendar page 37, Calendar 90, Senate Bill 464. We might delete that item. And then if the -- if we would call for a roll call on the consent calendar.

THE CHAIR:

Is there any objection? See no objection at this time, would you please announce another roll call and

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the machine will be opened.

THE CLERK:

An immediate roll call vote has been ordered on the first consent calendar. Will all Senators please return to the Chamber. An immediate roll call vote has been ordered on the first consent calendar. Will all Senators please return to the Chamber.

THE CHAIR:

Have all members voted? All members have voted. The machine will be locked. And Mr. Clerk, would you announce the tally.

THE CLERK:

Madam President.

Total Number voting	34
Necessary for adoption	18
Those voting Yea	34
Those voting Nay	2
Those absent and not voting	0

THE CHAIR:

The consent calendar is adopted.

Senator Looney.

SENATOR LOONEY:

Thank you, Madam President.

Madam President, I would yield to Senator LeBeau

**JOINT
STANDING
COMMITTEE
HEARINGS**

**SELECT
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REP. HENNESSY: Thank you, sir, for your testimony. Any comments or questions from the Committee? Seeing none, thank you, sir.

Our next witness is Robert Hunter, VFW.

ROBERT HUNTER: Good afternoon, Chairman Hennessy. My name is Bob Hunter. I'm the State Legislative Representative for the Department of Connecticut, Veterans of Foreign Wars.

This is a new position for me, so I'm looking forward to a busy year. I'm actually going to be wearing a couple of hats this morning, and I wanted to, This is from the VFW side.

I wanted to laud the Committee on Proposed Bills, let's see, 5956 regarding the Internet website for the VA, and also about the contact list for the members who want to get information from the Department of Veterans Affairs.

Information is key, and getting information out to our veterans is critical. In a lot of cases it's an arduous task for some of the veterans who aren't quite so tech savvy.

If we have, you know, a one stop shop on the website that gets the veterans the information they need it's a wonderful start, and I'm sure something like this will grow. The word will get out and it will become viral.

The one concern that I did have about 369 was how the veterans would be vetted at the Department of Motor Vehicles. I noticed then in Section 27-100c there are provisions for vetting the veterans. I just want to make sure that that happens with 369.

Time to switch hats. Quite literally. I'm also a member of AmVets and I spoke to the State Commander last evening about Proposed Bill Number 374.

COMMISSIONER PATRICIA REHMER: We could, in fact there was a time when I was involved at the local level that we did do that. We would say to somebody, we know that you're a veteran and you need to go to either the federal VA or the Connecticut VA for services. But we have moved away from the practice because of some of the programs that we now offer that are specific for individuals that are returning from or going or being deployed to services.

So we have changed. But the other thing I would say is that we didn't always used to ask whether people were veterans, and that is now a required question on our intake forms. So everybody is asked whether they're a veteran, but they obviously have to chose to disclose that or not.

REP. ADINOLFI: Thank you.

REP. HENNESSY: Thank you, Representative. Any other questions from the Committee? Seeing none, thank you very much, Commissioner.

COMMISSIONER PATRICIA REHMER: Thank you.

REP. HENNESSY: Next witness is Commissioner Schwartz.

COMMISSIONER LINDA SCHWARTZ: Good morning to you all. It's good to see you again. There are several bills that I'll be addressing in -- in my presentation. And I would like to start with the Senate Bill 1070, AN ACT CONCERNING THE DEPARTMENT OF VETERANS' AFFAIRS. And I'm just going to hit the highlights of my points on this. It is the position of the Department that we are prepared to any -- answer any

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your needs, we would be glad to assist you.

I want to kind of shift gears to House Bill 5956, which is AN ACT CONCERNING THE INTERNET SERVICES OF THE -- SITE OF THE DEPARTMENT OF VETERANS' AFFAIRS. What I've done is I've attached the face page of our present website to my testimony for you, the members of the Committee. And I -- I hope you can see that it is really actually packed with a lot of information about federal, state benefits. It's actually on a par with other state agencies. In fact, I think IT -- IT has told us we're a little too busy with the amount of things that we have on the website.

But the truth of the matter is is no one is actually assigned to do public affairs for this Department. No one is actually assigned to run the website. So we have -- we are in the process of redesigning it, because we do see that it needs to be streamlined. But I think the fact that we get over 3,000 hits a month tells you something, that people do come to our site. And we -- our -- our actual -- my actual goal was to make that site someplace -- a touchstone for all things veteran in our state. And we're still working on it.

I think that the -- the need to have up-to-date information from both the federal and the state and the local level is -- is imperative so that the veterans today who are all very keyed in to using the internet. We also have some chat rooms and we also have had some opportunities with outreach to actually tap into federal VA educational programs.

The part of the proposed legislation which, one, is that I -- we have a problem with is the

fact that you are requiring a comprehensive study of the state and municipal benefits that would be posted on the website. We do have links to the veterans' service organizations, etc. But I brought with me a copy of a report that was -- is mandated by, and I'll be glad to leave this with you, but we were mandated by statute in 2007 to do a very similar study, which I was very excited about doing. That study was to look at all of the benefits that every state, every city and township provided, and what was the dollar amounts that were put on it.

What we found was it was an extremely labor-intensive process. Many of the towns didn't have the time to actually look up this information to provide us and, therefore, did not provide it to us. Some of the state agencies did not feel that we had the right, even though it was in statute, for us to be asking them these questions. So the bottom line here is that it is very labor intensive, I did have someone at the time on staff that I could actually designate to do this study. It was difficult.

Many people did not respond. And then I -- I asked what we actually used the information for. So we don't have that person anymore. And it would cost -- it would cost -- it would cost quite a bit to have someone who would be calling each town and each city trying to garner this information, trying to do the information for the -- from the agencies.

Let me say it is a worthy cause, but the information was incomplete by virtue of the fact that it was done on a yearly basis. And by the time we started, many people would not

respond by the end of the year. And as I mentioned, the towns and cities felt it was too much of a drain on their resources to even provide that information to us.

H.B. 6480, AN ACT CONCERNING THE IDENTIFICATION OF CONNECTICUT VETERANS ELIGIBLE FOR BENEFITS FROM THE UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF VETERANS' AFFAIRS. In my testimony, and I think Commissioner Rehmer touched on it, we have been working with the Department of Social Services. There is a federal program, it is called the Public Assistance Reporting Information System, sometimes called PARIS.

And this is a joint venture with the Department of Defense, the Department of Health and Human Services, and the Department of Veterans' Affairs. And as someone called my attention to earlier today, it was originally generated to be sure that people were not double-dipping, that they were not getting payments from Medicaid when they were really receiving a retirement or medical benefits from the VA.

However, what this -- we are in the process right now where DSS actually provides to us on a quarterly basis, they get it from the federal government, the electronic records of people who have been identified in -- in the -- the Social Security match as being veterans. What our problem right now is that we get so much information on an individual person, it's kind of overwhelming. It's even to the point we get the number of checks -- the number on their checks that were issued to them by the various agencies.

So we're -- where we are in the process is we're working trying to get it down to

have -- I have collaborated with the Office of the Attorney General, and they have suggested what I am suggesting to the Committee, that the issue might be better addressed through another agency that was actually involved in determining the eligibility for Social Security and Medicaid. And that concludes my testimony, if you have any questions.

REP. HENNESSY: Thank you, Commissioner.

REP. NICASTRO: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Commissioner, on the lighter side --

COMMISSIONER LINDA SCHWARTZ: Yes.

REP. NICASTRO: -- 5956, you talk about that you attached your brochure on this. I got to tell you, the picture doesn't become you.

COMMISSIONER LINDA SCHWARTZ: Thank you.

REP. NICASTRO: Okay. Please, seriously. Now on the serious side, really, it doesn't, but you're saying basically right now your department is doing this already?

COMMISSIONER LINDA SCHWARTZ: Yes.

REP. NICASTRO: And you feel that this bill in itself is really unnecessary?

COMMISSIONER LINDA SCHWARTZ: Well, the part of the bill that addresses updating, we update this probably at least once every week. Although I will be very honest with you, the person that was doing that update has left our employ. And we are now trying to teach some of our clerical people -- to have them go to IT to learn how to do the website management. So it's been a

little stagnant for maybe a month or two.

REP. NICASTRO: But basically then 5956 is basically repetitive of what you're already doing then?

COMMISSIONER LINDA SCHWARTZ: I see it as that. I -
- I understand the spirit, but there was other things that are attached to that bill about the website that they wanted posted, which was the information. And, you know, trying to get that information would not be a very easy thing to do.

REP. NICASTRO: 6479 regarding various veterans' benefits, you were very specific in there, you know, as you always are, which I was pleased to see. Again you're saying this would cost another between 57 and 74,000 dollars a year additional cost for your department?

COMMISSIONER LINDA SCHWARTZ: Right. Our -- our department is pretty lean actually, and we don't really have anybody that's actually -- that is their job description. We don't have that, so that would be an increase in the budget that we would need just to --

REP. NICASTRO: And even if we felt -- even if we felt strongly on this, we have to stop and consider that we're faced with a \$3.5 billion deficit and we've got to do something about that. And here we'd be adding -- between the two of them we'd be adding about \$150,000 additional that you'd need to start with.

COMMISSIONER LINDA SCHWARTZ: That's our estimate, yes.

REP. NICASTRO: Thank you. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

REP. HENNESSY: Thank you, Representative Nicastro. Thank you for your testimony, Commissioner. In regards to the website, I know that one of the ideas in it is that the state departments have different benefits for veterans that -- that may not be all that accessible. And so that was one of the ideas behind the bill was -- was to have all the departments of the state, at the state level not necessarily local levels, be available for people, you know, just to see exactly what the different departments have.

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COMMISSIONER LINDA SCHWARTZ: I think that, actually I welcome that and because of this bill, it has given me the chance to look at my own website and say, you know, some of the information we have there is a little busy, could we just get to -- back to some basics. And so that's what we're planning on doing. The -- the people that do it told us it's just too busy and it -- it's hard to follow, busy meaning too much information on the -- on the face page. So we are working on that right now.

And I understand that -- in this -- in this day in age, information technology and electronics, it's -- it's worth that. So we have actually, do send out notices, people can sign up on our website for notices of updates to the -- anything that's happening. We do that. And also we have an established women veterans' network, which is a email kind of way in which women veterans can communicate, and we can communicate with them on anything new in the -- in the care and services and programs for that -- for women veterans.

REP. HENNESSY: Thank you. I haven't checked out the website, and I'm going to be sure and do that pretty soon. Is there any other questions



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DEPARTMENT OF VETERANS' AFFAIRS
OFFICE OF THE COMMISSIONER
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Dr. Linda S. Schwartz, RN, MSN, DrPH, FAAN
Commissioner

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TESTIMONY
COMMISSIONER LINDA S. SCHWARTZ, RN, MSN, DrPH, FAAN
Connecticut Department of Veterans' Affairs
Presented to the Select Committee on Veterans' Affairs
March 1, 2011

HB 5956 HB 6479
HB 6480

Chairman Hennessey, Senator Maynard and distinguished members of the Select Committee on Veterans' Affairs, I am Dr. Linda S. Schwartz, Commissioner of the Connecticut Department of Veterans' Affairs (DVA), and I am pleased to offer testimony today on several measures being considered by the Committee today.

SB 1070 An Act Concerning the Department of Veterans' Affairs. SB 1070 directs that the Department of Veterans' Affairs conduct a study comparing the policies of Connecticut with other states with regard to "maintenance of a contact list for the veterans and members of the armed forces; collection of employment statistics for veterans in the state and the effectiveness of providing information to veterans regarding benefits." It is the position of the Department that we are prepared to answer any of the questions the Committee may have regarding these issues without a study or formal legislation. By virtue of the fact that I am the President of the National Association of State Directors of Veteran Affairs, I am in daily contact with my counterparts in every state and territory. If you recall last week when we discussed the concept of ID cards for veterans, I provided information on the number of states that had or were presently engaged in enacting legislation to include the veteran identifiers on driver's licenses. As to the information on employment statistics by law, employment has never been part of the Federal or State Departments of Veteran Affairs responsibilities. This responsibility is reserved and funded by the Federal Government through the Connecticut Department of Labor which has an entire "Veterans Employment and Training Division" which is tasked with assisting veterans and monitoring employment trends in Connecticut.

As to the effectiveness of our efforts in providing information to veterans, the Office of Advocacy and Assistance (OA&A) is responsible for assisting veterans and their families in accessing federal, state and local benefits and entitlements. Veterans Service Officers, accredited by the U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs, assist veterans and their families with documentation and filing of claims for disability and/or compensation. Staff offices are located in each of the five Congressional Districts (Bridgeport, Waterbury, West Haven, Newington and Norwich) and include bilingual staff and a woman's veterans' services coordinator. Additional advocacy work is performed throughout the state on a staff available, rotating basis at satellite office locations and through the "Vet Express" mobile outreach van. Veterans Service Officers also conduct interviews in skilled nursing facilities throughout the state to determine the number of veterans admitted and ascertain which benefits these veterans are currently receiving and/or are entitled to receive.

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Since its inception in 1988, the OA&A unit has brought more than \$56.7 million into the state in the form of new or increased Federal benefits to Connecticut veterans and their families. We measure effectiveness by the amount of compensation and benefits this office has been able to retrieve. As we have tracked these numbers, we have seen a steady increase in these totals over time. Last year our advocacy efforts resulted in over \$5 million in new income and benefits to Connecticut veterans and their families compared to \$4 million in FY08-09 and \$3.2 million in FY07-08. Another method of comparison is the total amounts of Federal benefits awarded to veterans in each state. For example Connecticut has climbed from being ranked 48 out of 50 States when I became Commissioner in 2003 to 39 out of 50 States. This comparison is not on a per capita basis and is irrespective of the size of the veteran population in each State. This aspect of our services remains a priority. I would add that if there are any questions or statistics that the Committee may require for future deliberations or informational purposes, the Department of Veterans' Affairs stands ready to respond in a timely and comprehensive manner.

HB 5956, An Act Concerning the Internet Web Site of the Department of Veterans' Affairs, and HB 6479 An Act Concerning Various Veterans' Benefits. **HB 5956** would require the Department to maintain an Internet website that provides information concerning services, benefits and programs available to veterans and their families by all Federal state, local and private agencies and organizations. I have attached the face page of our present website to this testimony. As you can see it is packed with information about Federal and State benefits, programs, news items and updates. Additionally, the content is comparable to other State agencies and other states. We do have many links to Federal and state agencies and veteran service organizations. We have made continuous improvements to the site and we update it several times a month to keep it current and relevant. We get over 3,000 hits per month and have worked to make this site a source of all things veteran in Connecticut.

However, the requirements required in this legislation are well beyond the capacity of the agency. DVA does not have a dedicated public affairs or IT personnel assigned to website management. The estimated cost of such a position would be \$51,488-63,987. In actuality, the directives of the proposed legislation pose unrealistic and unfunded mandates which have been attempted by DVA in the past few years. Connecticut General Statutes Sec. 27-102p went into effect in 2007 and directed an annual report by the Commissioner of Veterans' Affairs that would include some of the same information requested in **HB 5956** and in **HB 6479 An Act Concerning Various Veterans' Benefits**, specifically calling for "a description of each type of benefit provided to veterans, by state agencies and municipalities and the value of such benefit and the number of veterans to whom such benefit was provided, for the twelve-month period ending on June thirtieth of the same year."

This was a very labor intensive and prolonged exercise which became impossible because agencies and municipalities questioned the authority of DVA to access or require their assistance to provide this information. After repeated attempts, most did not respond and the utilization of the information was questionable. In order to comply with these bills and existing statutes requiring the production of multiple studies and reports, we estimate DVA would need at least one full time researcher to compile and keep the information current. The



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Commissioner

estimated cost of this position would be \$57,849- 74,864. We will be glad to share the information we collected with the Committee. However, our experience has also found that by the time a "study" and/or "report" can be accomplished much of the information is already out-of-date. Each day I receive from multiple sources, including from the U.S. Secretary of Veterans Affairs, news on changes, updates and new initiatives being implemented to accommodate the emerging needs of veterans. In this technologically advanced and electronic messaging systems atmosphere, it is more cost effective and efficient to study the subject in real time rather than provide an outdated report. DVA stands ready to provide any specific information required by the Select Committee on Veterans Affairs through simple requests rather than through legislation and welcomes the opportunity to provide this support on a timely basis.

HB 6480 An Act Concerning the Identification of Connecticut Veterans Eligible for Benefits from the U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs. DVA supports the spirit and intent of HB 6480. I am happy to report that we have already entered into a memorandum of understanding with DSS that provides for the exchange of information described in the HB 6480 via the Public Assistance Reporting Information System (PARIS) which is a Federal-State partnership authorized by Congress. PARIS is a computer matching process by which the social security numbers of public assistance recipients are matched against Federal databases which include the U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs and the Department of Defense. This system is operated under the auspices of the Administration for Children and Families, an agency of the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services.

I first learned about this several years ago and attempted to enlist the support of other state agencies in using this system to assist DVA in identifying Connecticut veterans that might be eligible for services and programs provided by the Federal VA. Once operational, PARIS can identify individuals receiving medical benefits and social support programs from the State of Connecticut who may also be entitled to Federal benefits and health care including wartime pensions, health care and medications. This match would provide information for my agency to identify, contact and apprise eligible Connecticut veterans about their eligibility and VA and/or DOD programs and benefits to which they are entitled. This process has the potential and the goal of transferring veterans from services provided by partially state-funded Medicaid to comparable, and in some cases, better Federal programs. While the savings to Connecticut is estimated to be \$2 million annually, changes in eligibility and Federal benefit for veterans indicate that this is a conservative estimate. The proposed legislation will facilitate this process to include veterans currently being served by DMHAS.

We were fortunate that DSS was most interested in PARIS and the potential savings this could mean to our state. Planning has been in progress for almost a year. At this point, the data provided by the Federal systems is more than our IT system can handle and we are working with DSS to condense the pertinent information into a format that can easily be used by DVA Veteran Service Officers. Once this process is perfected, we will be operational. I

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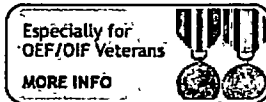


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[Apply for admission to the Veterans Home](#)

[Nominate a veteran for the Hall of Fame](#)

[Learn about the CT Veterans Hall of Fame](#)

[Get help obtaining veterans' benefits](#)

[Get help obtaining a job or job training](#)

[Learn more about the GI Bill for education](#)

[Apply to volunteer at the Veterans' Home](#)

[Make a donation to the Veterans Home/See the Wish List](#)

[Apply for Veterans Tax Exemptions](#)

[Get a copy of the Connecticut Veterans Resource Guide](#)

FEDERAL VA INFORMATION

[ATTENTION KOREAN WAR VETERANS -
click here for special announcement](#)

[Veterans and Active Duty - Free
Energy Assessment from Home Energy
Solutions - Click here for details](#)

**CT DVA LAUNCHES DIGITAL
DIRECTORY OF VETERANS
MEMORIALS IN CT TOWNS**

Fisher House Foundation will provide free airfare for soldiers, spouses or their primary caregivers for travel to LasikPlus vision centers. LCA-Vision / LasikPlus will provide laser vision correction free of charge. Click here for details.

VETS LINK is a non-profit 501 (c) (3) organization offering hands-on mentoring and services to guide veterans and their families through the financial issues that arise in their lives.
www.VetsLinkConnecticut.com

The CT Dept of Veterans' Affairs has **NEW PHONE NUMBERS** for the agency. The new **AGENCY MAIN NUMBER** is 860-616-3600. Click here to print out a CTDVA Directory

Entrepreneurship Bootcamp for Veterans with Disabilities (<http://whitman.syr.edu/ebv>). Co-Sponsored by University of Connecticut.

> [News from Veterans & Organizations](#)

Info about Snowsport Camps for Women Vets with TBI/PTSD & disabilities

[MORE NEWS >](#)

toll-free 24/7 REFERRAL SERVICES
877-WAR VETS (877-927-8387)

*****WARNING TO ALL VETERANS -
FRAUD ALERT DO NOT GIVE PERSONAL
INFORMATION TO A GROUP CALLED
"VETERANS AFFAIRS SERVICES" Click
here for details*****

[INDEX to Federal VA benefits](#)

[VA SUICIDE Prevention HOTLINE, 800-273- TALK](#)

[VA Urges Veterans to Sign Up for Direct Deposits \(click here for details\)](#)

[GET A COPY OF 2010 FEDERAL VETERANS BENEFITS GUIDE](#)

- [VA New Simplified Claims Forms. Click here](#)
- [VA FACT SHEET - Information for Veterans about Healthcare Reform](#)
- [FEDERAL VA Announces changes in 2010 benefits. Click here for details](#)
- [Federal VA Benefits in Brief. Click here for a 2 page synopsis](#)
- [GOVERNMENT JOBS FOR VETS Go to: <http://www.fedshirevets.gov/>](#)
- [VA Extends "Agent Orange" Benefits to More Veterans -Click here for details.](#)
- [VA sets up office to support "Survivors of Veterans" Click here for more Info](#)
- [The US Departments of Defense, Labor and Veterans Affairs-National Resource Directory \[www.NationalResourceDirectory.gov\]\(http://www.NationalResourceDirectory.gov\).](#)





Connecticut Department of Veterans' Affairs



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Benefits Information
Human Resources
Forms
Programs & Services
Veteran's Links
DVA Employee login

Organizations

- ▶ [American Ex-Prisoners of War](#)
- ▶ [American Gold Star Mothers](#)
- ▶ [American Legion](#)
- ▶ [American Legion Post 2](#)
- ▶ [American Red Cross](#)
- ▶ [America Supports You](#)
- ▶ [American Veterans \(AMVETS\)](#)
- ▶ [Association of the United States Army](#)
- ▶ [Blinded Veterans Association](#)
- ▶ [Catholic War Veterans, USA, INC.](#)
- ▶ [CHFA Veterans Homeownership Program](#)
- ▶ [Civilian Employment Rights for Armed Services and Veterans](#)
- ▶ [Compass North Group \(Employment-Related Help\)](#)
- ▶ [Connecticut Blue Star Mothers](#)
- ▶ [Connecticut ESGR](#)
- ▶ [Connecticut Military Department](#)
- ▶ [Connecticut National Guard Foundation](#)
- ▶ [Connecticut Sons of the American Revolution](#)
- ▶ [DD-214's Online](#)
- ▶ [Disabled American Veterans](#)
- ▶ [Electrical and HVAC Apprenticeship Programs for US Veterans](#)
- ▶ [Employer Support of the Guard and Reserve](#)
- ▶ [Feds Hire Vets](#)
- ▶ [Fleet Reserve Association](#)
- ▶ [Fund for Veterans Education](#)
- ▶ [Gold Star Wives of America](#)
- ▶ [Give 2 the Troops](#)
- ▶ [Groton Base Submarine Veterans Web Site](#)



Department of Veterans' Affairs
287 West Street
Rocky Hill, CT 06067

NEW! 860-616-3600
Fax: 860-616-3532

Veterans Info Line
1-866-9CT-VETS
(1-866-928-8387)

Driving Directions

- ▶ [Hispanic - American Veterans of CT](#)
- ▶ [Italian-American War Veterans](#)
- ▶ [Jewish War Veterans of the USA](#)
- ▶ [Long Term Care Services and Support](#)
- ▶ [Marine Corps League](#)
- ▶ [Military Connection](#)
- ▶ [Military Officers Association of America](#)
- ▶ [Military One Source](#)
- ▶ [Military Order of the Purple Heart](#)
- ▶ [Military Support Program](#)
- ▶ [Polish Legion of American Veterans](#)
- ▶ [SBA Patriot Express Program](#)
- ▶ [Silver Star Families of America](#)
- ▶ [VA Prosthetics Web Site](#)
- ▶ [VA Returning OIF/OEF Veterans](#)
- ▶ [Veterans of Foreign Wars \(VFW\)](#)
- ▶ [VETSConnect program](#)
- ▶ [Vietnam Veterans of America](#)
- ▶ [Women In Military Service For America Memorial](#)

FF0000Updated 02/10/2009

SUMMARY

War Bonuses	Nursing Care	State Veterans Cemeteries	Property Tax Exempt/Credit	Home Loans	Reduced Education Fees for Veteran	Reduced Education Fees for Veteran's Family	Personal Loans and Grants	Reduced License Fees	
								Hunt	Fish
AL V (POW only)	3	NONE	YES	NONE	NONE	YES	NONE	NONE	YES
AK NONE	1	NONE	YES	YES	NONE	YES	NONE	YES	YES
AZ NONE	1	1	S/D	NONE	NONE	NONE	NONE	YES	YES
AR *	1	1	YES	NONE	NONE	YES	NONE	YES	YES
CA NONE	3	2	YES	YES	NONE	YES	NONE	YES	YES
CO V	5	2	S/D	NONE	YES	YES	NONE	YES	YES
CT 2, K, V	3	3	YES	NONE	YES	YES	NONE	NONE	NONE
DE 1, 2, K, V	1	2	S/D	NONE	NONE	YES	NONE	YES	YES
DC NONE	1	NONE	YES - S	NONE	NONE	NONE	NONE	NONE	NONE
FL NONE	5	NONE	YES	NONE	YES	YES	NONE	YES	YES
GA NONE	2	1	YES	NONE	NONE	NONE	NONE	YES	YES
HI *	1	8	YES	NONE	NONE	YES	NONE	NONE	NONE
ID NONE	3	1	YES	NONE	NONE	YES	YES	YES	YES
IL 2, K, V, D	4	1	YES - SAH	NONE	YES	YES	YES	YES	YES
IN 1, 2, K, V	1	2	YES	NONE	YES	YES	NONE	YES	YES
IA 1, 2, K, V	1	1	YES	NONE	NONE	YES	YES	YES	YES
KS 1	2	1	S/D	NONE	NONE	YES	NONE	NONE	NONE
KY NONE	3	3	YES	NONE	NONE	YES	NONE	YES	YES
LA S, 1, 2, K, V, D, MM	5	1	YES	NONE	YES	YES	YES	YES	YES
ME 1	5	3	YES	NONE	NONE	YES	YES	YES	YES
MD NONE	1	5	YES	NONE	YES	YES	NONE	YES	YES
MA 1, 2, K, V, D, GWOT	2	2	YES	YES	YES	YES	YES	NONE	NONE
MI 1, 2, K, V	2	NONE	YES	NONE	NONE	NONE	YES	YES	YES
MIN 1, 2, K, V, D	5	1	S/D	NONE	YES	YES	YES	YES	YES
MS NONE	5	NONE	S/D	YES	NONE	YES	NONE	YES	YES
MO NONE	7	5	YES	NONE	YES	YES	NONE	YES	YES
MT 1, 2, V, K	2	3	YES	NONE	YES	YES	NONE	YES	YES
NE NONE	4	1	YES	NONE	NONE	YES	YES	YES	YES
NV NONE	1	2	YES	NONE	NONE	YES	NONE	YES	YES
NH 2, K, V, D, GWOT	1	1	YES	NONE	NONE	YES	NONE	YES	YES
NJ V, D	3	2	YES	NONE	YES	YES	NONE	YES	YES
NM *	2	NONE	YES	NONE	YES	YES	NONE	YES	YES
NY 1, 2	5	NONE	YES	YES	YES	YES	YES	YES	YES
NC NONE	2	3	YES	NONE	NONE	YES	NONE	YES	YES
ND 2, K, V, D, I, AF, KO, SOM, BOS	1	1	YES	NONE	YES	YES	YES	NONE	NONE
OH 1, 2, K, V	2	1	YES	YES	YES	YES	YES	YES	YES
OK NONE	7	1	YES	NONE	NONE	NONE	YES	YES	YES
OR *	1	NONE	YES	YES	YES	YES	YES	YES	YES
PA 2, K, V, D, MM	6	1	YES	NONE	YES	YES	YES	YES	YES
RI 2, K, V	1	1	YES	NONE	YES	NONE	NONE	YES	YES
SC NONE	3	1	YES	NONE	NONE	YES	YES	YES	YES
SD S, 1, 2, K, V, D	1	1	YES - SAH	NONE	YES	YES	YES	YES	YES

