

PA13-224

SB0383

House	10741-10742, 10761-10763	5
Senate	2269-2271, 2283-2285	6
Veterans	183-186, 187-189, 227-228, 234	10
		21

H - 1180

**CONNECTICUT
GENERAL ASSEMBLY
HOUSE**

**PROCEEDINGS
2013**

**VETO
SESSION**

**VOL.56
PART 31
10451 - 10795**

law/gbr
HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

551
June 5, 2013

further on the bill as amended? Representative
Willis.

REP. WILLIS (64th):

Yes, Mr. Speaker. May I -- this resolution --
bill be moved on the Consent Calendar.

SPEAKER SHARKEY:

The motion is to move this item to the Consent
Calendar. Is there objection? Is there objection?
So ordered. Will the Clerk please call Calendar 555.

THE CLERK:

Calendar 555, favorable report of the joint
standing Committee on Planning and Development,
substitute Senate Bill 964, AN ACT CONCERNING THE
SOUTH CENTRAL CONNECTICUT REGIONAL WATER AUTHORITY.

SPEAKER SHARKEY:

Representative Aresimowicz.

REP. ARESIMOWICZ (30th):

Mr. Speaker, I'm about to list off a bunch of
Calendar numbers that we will be placing on the
Consent Calendar. It would be Calendar 555, Calendar
578, Calendar 596, Calendar 679, Calendar 684,
Calendar 692, Calendar 612, Calendar 665.

SB 964 SB 833
SB 383 SB 900
SJ 58 SB 1163
SB 1079
SB 709

SPEAKER SHARKEY:

If there's no objection, these items mentioned by

law/gbr
HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

552
June 5, 2013

Representative Aresimowicz will be placed on the
Consent Calendar. Will the Clerk please call Calendar
591.

THE CLERK:

On page 22, Calendar 591, favorable report of the
joint standing Committee on Judiciary, substitute
Senate Bill 1040, AN ACT CONCERNING COUNTERFEIT AND
NONFUNCTIONAL AIRBAGS.

SPEAKER SHARKEY:

Representative Anthony Guerrero.

REP. GUERRERA (29th):

Good evening, Mr. Speaker. I move acceptance of
the joint Committee's favorable report and passage of
the bill in concurrence with the Senate.

SPEAKER SHARKEY:

The question is acceptance of the joint
committee's favorable report and passage of the bill
in concurrence with the Senate. Will you remark, Sir?

REP. GUERRERA (29th):

Yes. This is a good bill and I would ask
everyone to vote for it. Thank you.

SPEAKER SHARKEY:

Thank you, Sir. I believe there's an amendment.

REP. GUERRERA (29th):

Nine four.

SPEAKER SHARKEY:

Nine four previously designated as Senate A.

THE CLERK:

Senate Amendment A, substitute Senate Bill 158,
LCO 5894.

REP. URBAN (43rd):

I move adoption.

REP. CAFERO (142nd):

Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, we did not --

THE CLERK:

-- introduced by Senator Williams.

REP. URBAN (43rd):

Five eight nine four, I move adoption.

REP. CAFERO (142nd):

No. PT this. I mean I would request that.

Whatever you want to do.

SPEAKER SHARKEY:

The question is -- the question is PT. Without
objection so ordered. Clerk please call -- will the
Clerk please call Calendar 659. Six five nine. Yeah.

THE CLERK:

Bill number 1020, Bill number 1006, 963, 878,
964, 833, 383, 900, Senate Joint 58, 1163, 1079, 709,

1040, 326, 803, 886, 1065, 983, 190 and 158 on the
Consent Calendar.

SPEAKER SHARKEY:

Representative -- Representative Aresimowicz.

REP. ARESIMOWICZ (30th):

Mr. Speaker, I move adoption of the Consent
Calendar.

SPEAKER SHARKEY:

Staff and guests to the well of the House.

Members take your seats. The machine will be opened.
Open the board, Mr. Clerk. Open the board for the
Consent Calendar. Staff and guests to the well of the
House. Members take your seats. The machine will be
opened for the Consent Calendar.

THE CLERK:

The House of Representatives is voting by roll.

The House of Representatives is voting by roll. Will
members please come to the well of the Chamber please.
The House is voting immediately.

SPEAKER SHARKEY:

Have all the members voted? Have all the members
voted? Members please check the board to make sure
your vote is properly cast. If all the members have
voted the machine will be locked and the Clerk will

take a tally. Will the Clerk please announce the tally.

THE CLERK:

On the Consent Calendar, Mr. Speaker.

Total Number Voting	146
Necessary for Adoption	74
Those voting aye	146
Those voting nay	0
Absent and not voting	4

SPEAKER SHARKEY:

The bill -- or the Consent Calendar passes.

Representative Aresimowicz.

REP. ARESIMOWICZ (30th):

Mr. Speaker.

SPEAKER SHARKEY:

Mr. Majority Leader.

REP. ARESIMOWICZ (30th):

Mr. Speaker, I move we adjourn sine die.

SPEAKER SHARKEY:

The motion is to adjourn sine die. Seeing no objection, so ordered.

(On motion of Representative Aresimowicz of the 30th District, the House adjourned at 12:02 o'clock a. m.,

S - 659

**CONNECTICUT
GENERAL ASSEMBLY
SENATE**

**PROCEEDINGS
2013**

**VOL. 56
PART 8
2153 - 2500**

I believe it was Calendar 35, Calendar Number 39,
Senate Bill 597.

THE CHAIR:

Thank you, sir; sorry.

SENATOR LOONEY:

Thank you, Madam President.

THE CHAIR:

Thank you.

Mr. Clerk.

THE CLERK:

On Calendar Page 46, Calendar Number 407, Substitute
for Senate Bill Number 383, AN ACT ESTABLISHING A
MUNICIPAL OPTION TO PROVIDE AN ADDITIONAL PROPERTY TAX
EXEMPTION FOR ONE HUNDRED PERCENT DISABLED VETERANS,
Favorable Report from the Committee on Veterans
Affairs.

THE CHAIR:

Senator Leone.

SENATOR LEONE:

Good evening, Madam President. Thank you.

I move acceptance of the joint committee's Favorable
Report and passage of the bill.

THE CHAIR:

Motion is on acceptance and passage. Will you remark,
sir?

SENATOR LEONE:

Yes; thank you, Madam President.

The purpose of this bill is to provide the municipalities with the option of expanding the municipal tax exemption for 100 percent disable Veterans. What this would do is increase the additional property tax exemption of a hundred-percent disabled Veterans with limited income, those of no more than 18,000 if they're single or 21,000 if they're married, and move their eligibility from two times to three times base exemption. And what this would do is allow Veterans that don't have the ability to generate income due to, due to their hundred-percent disability to have meaningful tax reform.

And so I want to thank all the members of the Veterans Committee, my Ranking Members; this passed overwhelmingly through Veterans, P and D, and Finance, as well, with wide support.

So I would urge passage of the bill.

Thank you.

THE CHAIR:

Will you remark? Will you remark?

Senator Welch.

SENATOR WELCH:

Thank you, Madam President.

I want to thank Senator Leone for bringing this bill out and putting this concept forward. It's a great idea.

You know, we just had a discussion about unfunded mandates, and this is not one because we're talking about a municipal option here. So we're really just empowering our towns to make good decisions and leaving the decision up to them.

I support the bill.

Thank you, Madam President.

THE CHAIR:

Thank you.

Will you remark? Will you remark?

Senator Leone.

SENATOR LEONE:

Thank you, Madam President.

If there is no objection, I would like to move this item on the Consent Calendar.

THE CHAIR:

Seeing no objection, so ordered, sir.

Mr. Clerk.

THE CLRTK:

On Calendar Page 42, Number 271, Substitute for Senate Bill Number 1072, AN ACT CONCERNING THE GAMING POLICY BOARD, Favorable Report from the Committee on Public Safety.

THE CHAIR:

Good evening, Senator Hartley.

SENATOR HARTLEY:

Good evening, Madam President.

I move acceptance of the joint committee's Favorable Report, madam, and passage of the bill.

THE CHAIR:

Motion is on acceptance and passage. Please proceed, ma'am.

SENATOR HARTLEY:

Yes. Thank you, very much.

THE CHAIR:

So ordered, sir.

SENATOR LOONEY:

Thank you, Madam President.

Madam President, if the Clerk would now proceed to read the items placed on the Consent Calendar today, before calling for a vote on that Consent Calendar.

THE CHAIR:

Mr. Clerk.

THE CLERK:

Beginning on Calendar Page 3, Number 146, Senate Bill Number 959; also on Calendar Page 3, Number 165, Senate Bill 327.

On Calendar Page 8, Number 303, Senate Bill Number 1018.

On Page 22, Calendar Number 511, House Bill 6243.

On Page 23, Calendar Number 517, House Bill 6453.

On Page 24, Calendar Number 525, House Bill 6457; also on Page 24, Calendar Number 526, Senate Bill 1079.

On Page 25, Calendar Number 527, Senate Bill 1131; also on Page 25, Calendar Number 529, Senate Bill 965. Finally, on Page 25, Calendar Number 531, Senate Bill 986.

On Page 29, Calendar Number 562, House Bill 5387.

On Page 35, Calendar Number 39, Senate Bill 597.

On Page 40, Calendar 210, Senate Bill 817.

THE CHAIR:

Mr. Clerk, on Page 35, have you also seen Calendar Number 44, Senate Bill 809?

A VOICE:

Yeah.

THE CHAIR:

(Inaudible) wrong. Okay. Okay; I apologize, sir.

Please proceed.

THE CLERK:

On Calendar Page 40, Number 210, Senate Bill 817.

On Page 41, Calendar 254, Senate Bill 1013.

On Calendar Page 42, Number 271, Senate Bill 1072;
also on Page 42, Calendar Number 286, Senate Bill
1113.

On Page 44, Calendar 364, Senate Bill 1014.

On Page 46, Calendar Number 397, Senate Bill 992; also
on Page 46, Calendar 406, Senate Bill 1129. And
finally, on Page 46, Calendar 407, Senate Bill 383.

THE CHAIR:

Mr. Clerk, I ask for a roll call vote. The machine
will be open for the Consent Calendar.

THE CLERK:

Immediate roll call vote has been ordered in the
Senate on the Consent Calendar. Immediate roll call
vote has been ordered in the Senate; Senators please
return to the Chamber.

THE CHAIR:

All members have voted: all members voted? The
machine will be closed.

Mr. Clerk, will you please call the tally.

THE CLERK:

On the Consent Calendar.

Total Voting	36
Voting Yea	36
Voting Nay	0
Absent, not voting	0

THE CHAIR:

The Consent Calendar passes.

Senator Looney.

SENATOR LOONEY:

Thank you, Madam President.

Madam President, at this point, having concluding the day's business, would certainly yield the floor to any members for purposes of announcements or committee meeting or -- or other points of personal privilege.

THE CHAIR:

Are there any point -- points of personal privilege or announcements? Are there any personal privileges or announcement?

Senator McKinney.

SENATOR McKINNEY:

Thank you, Madam President.

Madam President, as fate would have it, we came close yesterday to being able to celebrate the birthday of two of our members. Yesterday we celebrated the birthday of Senator Slossberg; today, we get to celebrate the birthday of Senator Len Fasano, so --

THE CHAIR:

All right.

SENATOR McKINNEY:

**JOINT
STANDING
COMMITTEE
HEARINGS**

**VETERANS'
AFFAIRS
PART 1
1 – 250**

**2013
INDEX**

gives them the opportunity to compete. Veterans don't look for handouts. They look for opportunity.

SENATOR LEONE: Right. I just wanted to make, be sure that we're not picking winners or losers here at the expense of veterans or any other organization, because if we go down that road, there really is no end in sight. So I just wanted to make sure I'm clear on what -- how you were explaining the process, and -- and I'll be happy to talk with you at length on this one. So I -- I appreciate your comments.

ANTHONY PILEGGI: I'd be interested in getting answers to those questions.

Now, if -- if a -- if a firm is owned by a woman, it's a DBE. If that woman is also a veteran, that doesn't help her get into that set-aside program. So it's -- so it's gender, and it's ethnicity.

SENATOR LEONE: Thank you. Are there any other questions? If not, thank you, sir.

ANTHONY PILEGGI: Thanks for your time.

SENATOR LEONE: Ms. Debbi Newton.

DEBBI NEWTON: Good afternoon. I'm actually here on -- in behalf of two Organizations, and I will make both of them very quick for you.

SB 152

SB 383

HB 5387

Senator Leone, Representative Hennessy, and Members of the Committee on Veterans' Affairs.

I'm Debbi Newton, Legislative Liaison for the Connecticut Veterans and Military Coalition, and Organization of about 25 veteran groups, here to speak on behalf of Proposed Bills 152 and 383, both of which propose to extend the Property Tax Exemption to 100 percent for 100 percent disabled veterans, and I think everyone that's been here today has spoken much more eloquently than I could, so I will leave it at that for you.

Putting on my other hat, I am here as the Legislative Chair of the National Guard Association of Connecticut. I have served in that position for ten years, and I'm in my 34th year with the Connecticut National Guard right now.

You have my written testimony. Many people have spoken on many of the bills in there, so I'm only going to concentrate on two, the Act providing free admission to and parking at State Parks.

I've included several pieces of documentation for you on what State Parks cost. If you look at them, the majority of them are about nine dollars on weekends for in-state residents. Some of them drop to six dollars during the week, and some have no admission fee at all during the week. The majority of them only charge approximately six months out of the year from May through October.

If you take 200 veteran families, and give them free admission to those State Parks, once a

month, over the six month period, the total cost is \$10,800, which is not a lot. I know we're in a budget crisis. That's why I wanted to give you those numbers, because it really is less than a part-time job for an individual, to allow 200 families once a month to go a State Park for free.

But let's also keep in mind that just like movies and new restaurants, you go to a park that you've never been to before, you have a great time, you go back and you tell your family and your friends about it, and now they're paying members that are going to a park they may never have gone to before. So this actually has the potential for increasing revenue, by getting family and friends to go to parks that they may not have gone to unless you've gone there free and told them how great it was.

There's also vending areas there that people are still going to need to pay for. We're not looking at boat launch fees, camping fees, or anything like that -- just to be able to go to the State Parks.

It also helps a lot of our soldiers and airmen to be able to go in that have TBI or post-traumatic stress. They can go in and relax for a few hours, enjoy nature, get more people out visiting the great things we have in our state.

I've also included a piece for you that the National Park Service gives one year passes to every member of the United States Military and

their dependents. So this is something -- we're, you know, there are other states in the country that do this, not a lot, and this is a place where Connecticut can lead the way.

The other bill I want to talk about is the ACT ESTABLISHING A TASK FORCE TO STUDY THE USE OF MILITARY OCCUPATIONAL SPECIALTY TRAINING.

HB 5387

This is a piece that two years ago the Connecticut General Assembly passed into law to allow this to happen -- not the Task Force, but to allow military occupational specialties be considered for civilian job skills. We were specifically testifying back then on things such as plumbing -- the people that go and get their plumbing MOS through the military, spend two or three, four years on active duty or overseas building and putting the plumbing in and everything come back. They have much more experience than anyone that has to go through the process from day one. We're not asking with this that their state testing be wiped out. We still expect them to do that. The Task Force is something that we assumed had been set up two years ago when the law passed allowing this. So for two years we've, in effect, held veterans and military people back from productive civilian occupations.

So we're just asking for your support of that bill, and if you have any questions, I'm more than willing to answer.

SENATOR LEONE: Thank you, Debbi, for your commands and from the Task Force perspective, we would

SB 152
SB 383

like to move that along as quickly as possible.
So thank you for that.

In terms of the -- the free passes at the parks, you quoted some figures. Have you talked with DEP on -- on this at all, because I'm sure they'll have -- they may have a different perspective. I'm assuming they may have different figures.

DEBBI NEWTON: These came off the DEP website yesterday.

SENATOR LEONE: Off of -- and -- and that's off of a list of veterans that actually went to the park? Is that --

DEBBI NEWTON: No.

SENATOR LEONE: How did they come up with that figure?

DEBBI NEWTON: The prices are what I gave you. I'm just assuming we have 200 that take --

SENATOR LEONE: Okay.

DEBBI NEWTON: -- advantage of it, and that's what the cost would be if 200 families per month, over six -- once a month for six months. That's what it would cost based on the fees, and I gave you the fee schedule from the DEP website.

SENATOR LEONE: Okay, because there's many more veterans in the state than that, so the cost could be much larger.

DEBBI NEWTON: It could be.

SENATOR LEONE: This is what I'm trying to get to.

DEBBI NEWTON: This is simple numbers.

SENATOR LEONE: Well, it's simple numbers, but it could be a number that has an adverse effect -- adverse impact fiscally --

DEBBI NEWTON: Right.

SENATOR LEONE: -- which, you know, we -- we need to be cognizant of, is what I'm trying to say.

DEBBI NEWTON: I believe last -- last year, we already gave the free admission to disabled veterans.

SENATOR LEONE: Yes. I remember that bill. I was the one who took that out in the Senate, and we passed it with bipartisan support.

So I'm -- I'm supportive of these efforts, but I'm also making sure that we cross the I's and --

DEBBI NEWTON: Absolutely.

SENATOR LEONE: -- and cross the Ts and dot the Is type of thing, and don't move too quickly without understanding the true impact.

DEBBI NEWTON: Right.

SENATOR LEONE: So thank you. Are there any questions?

Yes. Representative Alexander.

REP. ALEXANDER: Thank you, Mr. Chair. Just real quick. When it comes to your support, ma'am, of the Task Force, would it be your position, let's say for plumbing, that you would want to treat the veteran coming back to Connecticut just like someone from a neighboring state that was qualified as a plumber that's coming here to transfer their requirements to Connecticut to practice as a -- a plumber, or electrician, or a medical technician. Would that be your position? To treat them just like -- that's -- that's kind of my view, treat like anyone else coming in from any other states. Why are they treated differently if they have the same credentials?

HB5387

DEBBI NEWTON: Right, and like with the building inspector, there's going to be specific Connecticut Laws and Statutes that they would have to know, so yes, they'd have to learn that and test on that. We're not just looking for them to come in and be able to hang up their shingle and go right to work. But to meet any other criteria that they have not already met.

REP. ALEXANDER: Exactly. To treat them just like any other person with the same credentials or



Connecticut Veterans & Military Coalition
360 Broad Street, Hartford, Connecticut 06105
CTMilitaryCoalition@gmail.com

P13

Feb. 19, 2013

Testimony in Favor of Proposed Bills 152 and 383

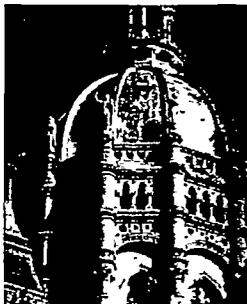
Good Afternoon Sen. Leone, Representative Hennessy and members of the Committee on Veterans Affairs. I am Debbi Newton, Legislative Liaison for the Connecticut Veterans & Military Coalition. The CVMC is an organization of about 25 groups such as the National Guard Association of Connecticut, the American Legion, Veterans of Foreign Wars, The Military Order of the Purple Heart, The Marine Corps Association, Association of the US Army and ESGR to name but a few. We have organized to provide one voice here at the State Legislature as well as on Capitol Hill in Washington. We represent more than 400,000 Veterans, Retirees, Servicemembers and their families and survivors.

Proposed Bills 152, An Act Concerning A Municipal Property Tax Exemption Program for One Hundred Percent Disabled Veterans and 383, An Act Establishing A Municipal Option to Provide An Additional Property Tax Exemption for One Hundred Per Cent Disabled Veterans are bills CV&MC Strongly support. Any Veteran who has served his or her country and is 100% disabled due to that service should receive a property tax exemption equal to that disability. We urge passage of the 100% property tax exemption.

I thank you for your time and for what you do for the Veterans, Military Members and Retirees of Connecticut and their families. This concludes my testimony and I am available for any questions you may have.

Sincerely,

Debbi Newton
Legislative Liaison CV&MC
860-913-5010
ctmilitarycoalition@gmail.com



CCM 2013 Testimony

900 CHAPEL STREET, 9th FLOOR, NEW HAVEN, CT 06510-2807 PHONE (203) 498-3000 FAX (203) 562-6314

Your source for local government management information www.ccm-ct.org

VETERANS' AFFAIRS COMMITTEE

February 19, 2013

The Connecticut Conference of Municipalities (CCM) is Connecticut's statewide association of towns and cities and the voice of local government - your partners in governing Connecticut. Our members represent over 92% of Connecticut's population. We appreciate the opportunity to testify on bills of interest to towns and cities.

<u>SB 152</u>	Municipal Property Tax Exemption Program For One Hundred Percent Disabled Veterans
<u>SB 383</u>	Municipal Option To Provide An Additional Property Tax Exemption For One Hundred Per Cent Disabled Veterans
<u>HB 5133</u>	Expansion Of The Property Tax Exemption For Veterans
<u>HB 5134</u>	Property Tax Exemption For Veterans
<u>HB 5556</u>	Municipal Option To Provide A Property Tax Exemption For All Veterans
<u>HB 5753</u>	Property Tax Exemption For Veterans Who Served In Time Of War Or Are Disabled

These worthy proposals would impose "de facto mandates" by advocating various "options" that would expand criteria and eligibility for local property tax exemptions – forcing many municipalities to feel compelled to enact, especially as our nation heals from one war, and winds down another. In a situation such as this, the State seeks to buy good will from a segment of the public – using extremely limited, local property tax dollars.

Good intentions can have unintended consequences – as would be the case with these proposals. Simply put, our hometowns cannot afford such a new unfunded state mandate as these bills would impose.

CCM urges the Committee to (1) obtain detailed fiscal analyses on the impact these well-intended proposals would have on our communities -- particularly on local programs and services, and (2) **hold these proposals until further analyses are conducted.**

★ ★ ★ ★ ★

If you have any questions, please contact Robert Labanara, State Relations Manager of CCM via email rlabanara@ccm-ct.org or via phone (203) 710-0491.



National Guard Association of Connecticut
360 Broad Street, Hartford, CT 06105-3795
www.ngact.org

Feb. 19, 2013

**Testimony in Favor of Proposed Bills 383, 5133, 5134, 5556,
5753, 5188, 5386, 5387, 649 and 6167**

Good Afternoon Sen. Leone, Representative Hennessy and members of the Committee on Veterans Affairs. I am Debbi Newton, Legislative Chair of the National Guard Association of Connecticut (NGACT). I have served in that position for 10 years and have been a member of the Connecticut National Guard for 33 years.

I am here today to speak in favor of several bills currently before you.

Proposed Bills 383, 5133, 5134, 5556 and 5753 all are designed to give Veterans and those who serve additional, or in some cases new, tax exemptions. Whether a member of the Armed Services has served overseas during time of war, served stateside during time of war or has served, they have all served their country, and in the case of National Guardsmen, their state. They have done it proudly and they have volunteered to do it. They constitute less than 1% of our country's population. That's right. Less than 1% of our country's population volunteers to serve in the US military. Allowing municipalities to offer these property tax exemptions and to expand the eligible group, is one way to say thank you to the few who do choose to serve.

Proposed Bill 5188, An Act Providing Free Admissions to and Parking at State Parks for Connecticut Veterans has been before you many times. In fact, I have heard some of you say you thought this act had, in fact, already been passed. It has not. Cost of entrance to the State Parks and Forests is minimal. Parking fees range from \$6 on weekdays to \$13 on weekends or holidays. Many parks do charge a fee at all during the week, and many only charge a fee from May through October. We understand that the financial situation in the state is not the best it has been, so let's look at it from the dollars and cents side of things. The average weekend cost of admission is \$9.00 per carload (or family). Let's say 200 Veteran families take advantage of the free admission per month. That is \$1,800 a month. Over the 6 month period that most parks charge a fee, the total cost would be \$10,800. But let us also remember that many of these parks have food for sale or souvenir shops which families would use...families that might not otherwise even go to these parks. In fact, I see this having a positive effect on potential revenue. If you go to a movie or restaurant and enjoy it, you tend to tell other people who then go based on what you've told them. The same would hold true with the parks and forests. If I go to a park I have not been to before because I can get in free and I tell my three brothers and they take their families someplace they might not have before, there are now three families paying admission. The National Park Service also offers a free annual pass to all National Parks to members of the US Military and their dependents. I have attached the State Park Fee Schedule as well as the National Parks and Federal