



Substitute House Bill No. 6949

Public Act No. 07-187

AN ACT CONCERNING THE ADMINISTRATION OF THE SOLDIERS, SAILORS AND MARINES FUND, SERVICE BONUSES FOR CERTAIN MEMBERS OF THE CONNECTICUT NATIONAL GUARD ON ACTIVE SERVICE WITH THE ARMED FORCES, AND THE EFFECTIVE DATE OF PROVISIONS PROHIBITING DISRUPTION OF A FUNERAL.

Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives in General Assembly convened:

Section 1. Section 27-61a of the general statutes is repealed and the following is substituted in lieu thereof (*Effective July 1, 2007*):

(a) As used in this section, "eligible member or veteran" means a member or former member of the Connecticut National Guard who (1) is or was called to active service on or after September 11, 2001, (2) is or was in such active service for at least ninety consecutive days, [(3) during such active service, is or was deployed to an area designated as a combat zone by the President of the United States, and (4)] and (3) if discharged, is or was honorably discharged or discharged for injuries sustained in the line of duty.

(b) (1) On and after July 1, 2005, the Adjutant General shall pay each eligible member or veteran the amount of fifty dollars for each month or major part thereof of active service by such eligible member or veteran on or after September 11, 2001. [The] On and before June 30,

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2007, the maximum payment to any eligible member or veteran shall not exceed five hundred dollars. [No payment shall be made to any eligible member or veteran who makes application for such payment later than three years after the date of the cessation of such operations in which such member or veteran served.]

(2) On and after July 1, 2007, the maximum payment to any eligible member or veteran under this subsection shall not exceed five hundred dollars, except that such maximum payment shall not exceed one thousand two hundred dollars if, during such active service, such eligible member or veteran is or was deployed to an area designated as a combat zone by the President of the United States.

(3) No payment shall be made under this subsection to any eligible member or veteran who makes application for such payment later than three years after the date of the cessation of such operations in which such member or veteran served.

(c) The Adjutant General, in consultation with the Commissioner of Veterans' Affairs, shall adopt regulations, in accordance with the provisions of chapter 54, to implement the provisions of this section. Such regulations shall include procedures for verification of eligibility of an eligible member or veteran and for the application for and payment of the amounts specified in this section.

Sec. 2. Section 27-138 of the general statutes is repealed and the following is substituted in lieu thereof (*Effective from passage*):

The Soldiers, Sailors and Marines Fund shall remain as established and shall be in the custody of the Treasurer as trustee of [said] the fund and shall be administered by the treasurer of the American Legion. The Treasurer shall [administer said] invest the fund [as required by the provisions of this chapter,] and shall reinvest as much of [said] the fund as is not required for current disbursement in accordance with

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the provisions of part I of chapter 32. The interest accumulations of the fund so held in trust or so much thereof as is found necessary to carry out the purposes hereinafter stated shall be paid, upon the order of the Comptroller, upon such statements as [he] the Comptroller may require, to the treasurer of the American Legion, who shall disburse the same, and the balance of said accumulations, except for a reserve of one hundred thousand dollars held in custody of the trustee for contingent purposes, shall at the end of each fiscal year be added to the principal of the fund. If the interest accumulations of the fund, together with available appropriations, if any, of other funds, are insufficient to carry out the purposes of this part, the Finance Advisory Committee, upon recommendation of the Governor, shall make appropriations therefor from the state General Fund, limited, however, for any fiscal year to amounts which, together with said interest accumulations for such year, shall not exceed the annual interest on thirty-five million dollars at the average rate of the investment yield earned during the preceding fiscal year on the Soldiers, Sailors and Marines Fund, provided, in case of disaster constituting an emergency, as declared by the Governor, the Finance Advisory Committee may make additional appropriations to [said] the fund without regard to such limitation. Payments to the treasurer of the American Legion shall be made at such definite and stated periods as are necessary to meet the convenience of the American Legion and said trustee; but each payment shall be made upon the order of the treasurer of the American Legion, approved by at least two of its executive officers or of a special committee thereof thereunto specially authorized. No part of the interest accumulation of [said] the fund shall be expended for the purpose of maintaining the American Legion.

Sec. 3. Section 27-138a of the general statutes is repealed and the following is substituted in lieu thereof (*Effective from passage*):

The [trustee] treasurer of the American Legion as administrator of

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the Soldiers, Sailors and Marines Fund [shall] may make available at each town clerk's office a copy of the regulations of [said] the fund and applications for aid from [said] the fund.

Sec. 4. Section 27-140 of the general statutes is repealed and the following is substituted in lieu thereof (*Effective from passage*):

All money so paid to and received by the American Legion shall be expended by it in furnishing food, wearing apparel, medical or surgical aid or care or relief to, or in bearing the funeral expenses of, soldiers, sailors or marines who performed service in time of war, as defined in subsection (a) of section 27-103, in any branch of the military service of the United States, including the Connecticut National Guard, or who were engaged in any of the wars waged by the United States during said periods in the forces of any government associated with the United States, who have been honorably discharged therefrom or honorably released from active service therein, and who were citizens or resident aliens of the state at the time of entering said armed forces of the United States, including the Connecticut National Guard, or of any such government, or to their spouses who are living with them, or to their widows or widowers who were living with them at the time of death, or dependent children under eighteen years of age, who may be in need of the same. All such payments shall be made by the American Legion under authority of its bylaws, which bylaws shall set forth the procedure for proof of eligibility for such aid, [and shall be approved by the trustee,] provided payments made for the care and treatment of any person entitled to the benefits provided for herein, at any hospital receiving aid from the General Assembly unless special care and treatment are required, shall be in accordance with the provisions of section 17b-239, and provided the sum expended for the care or treatment of such person at any other place than a state-aided hospital shall in no case exceed the actual cost of supporting such person at the Veterans'

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Home, unless special care and treatment are required, when such sum as may be determined by the treasurer of such organization may be paid therefor. The treasurer of such organization shall account to [said trustee] the Governor and the General Assembly during the months of January, April, July and October for all moneys disbursed by it during the three months next preceding the first day of either of said months, and such account shall show the amount of and the name and address of each person to whom such aid has been furnished. Upon the completion of the trust provided for in section 27-138, as amended by this act, the principal fund [so held by said trustee] shall revert to the State Treasury.

Sec. 5. (*Effective from passage*) Section 1 of public act 07-98 shall take effect from its passage.

Approved June 6, 2007