



State of Connecticut

SENATE

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Housing Committee – February 17, 2009 **Senate Bill 240 – An Act Concerning Housing Assistance for Veterans**

Chairman Edwin Gomes, Chairman Kenneth Green, Ranking Member John McKinney, Ranking Member Lawrence Miller and distinguished Members of the Housing Committee, I am Senator Michael McLachlan of the 24th District representing Danbury, Bethel, New Fairfield and Sherman.

Thank you for the opportunity to provide testimony in support of Senate Bill 240 – An Act Concerning Housing Assistance for Veterans.

Veterans returning home from World War II experienced many challenges finding affordable housing but a responsive government developed housing opportunities for our heroes. Over sixty years later many of the veteran's preferences for affordable housing are gone. This bill will allow us to provide a preference for veterans in any state program designed to provide affordable or subsidized housing.

I've spent the last several years as a member of the Danbury Housing Partnership working on a new program in our community – "*Housing for Heroes*." Our community's plan to end homelessness identified a need for veteran's housing. In partnership with the Veteran's Administration, the Danbury Welfare Department targeted beds in our city shelter for homeless vets. The VA is also partnering with a non-profit developer, the Danbury Housing Authority and Catholic Charities to create a new transitional housing project for veterans. The final phase of "*Housing for Heroes*" is the development of permanent housing opportunities for veterans. This program personifies the continuum of care for veterans by taking them from homelessness to their own home.

Senate Bill 240 will assist veterans in finding and maintaining affordable housing. We should honor our heroes and provide them a preference for housing opportunities in Connecticut.

Thank you for your consideration of this initiative.

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Michael McLachlan".

Senator Michael McLachlan