



CONNECTICUT ASSOCIATION OF
REALTORS[®]
INC.

Statement on

**S.B. 209: An Act Concerning The Real Estate Conveyance Tax
(Exemptions for Active Duty Military and their Survivors)**

SUPPORT

Submitted to the Select Committee on Veterans Affairs
February 25, 2010

By Robert Kimball

Good morning. I want to thank the CoChairs and members of this Select Committee for their interest in Senate Bill 209 and for this opportunity for public comment as well.

My name is Robert Kimball. While I speak for the Connecticut Association of Realtors, as a member of its Executive committee, my personal view is enhanced from long experience working in the eastern part of the State, home to the US Submarine Base and the US Coast Guard Academy. I hasten to add that the bill has far wider geographical impact since so many Connecticut citizens - - from towns all across the state - - are now mobilized as members of the National Guard and Reserves.

Simply put, Senate Bill 209 makes a bad tax less harmful. The real estate conveyance tax is widely recognized as regressive and extremely unstable as a revenue source. Connecticut did quite well without it for most of our history, that is, until 1983. Since then lawmakers increased its rates, added layer upon layer of variations, and expanded its reach .

Senate Bill 209 is a chance to change history by halting this pattern and telling some of our most valued citizens - - men and women serving in the US Armed Forces and Coast Guard - - that Connecticut will not penalize them with taxes on their homes when they are forced to move.

Real life examples abound on the hardships imposed on military families living in Connecticut. From the Army family in Meriden selling their home at a loss when ordered to Chicago, and forking over three conveyance taxes plus a "distressed cities" tax, to a Navy man who was pummeled when he sold his Groton home when assigned to Baltimore. Some of the best examples, however,

(continued)

111 Founders Plaza, Suite 1101, East Hartford, CT 06108-3212
Tel: (860) 290-6601 | Toll Free: (800) 335-4862 | Fax: (860) 290-6615
www.ctrealtor.com



The Voice for Real Estate™ in Connecticut

**A MESSAGE TO SELECT COMMITTEE
ON VETERAN AFFAIRS
FROM SPOUSE OF ACTIVE DUTY SERVICEMAN**

February 25,2010

in regards to

**SB 209: An Act Concerning the Real Estate Conveyance Tax:
*Exempting Spouses of Fallen Warriors and Active Duty Members of the Armed
Forces***

Please Pass this Bill !

from
Lora Merrill
Woodstock , CT

I have been the wife of an active duty member of the United States Coast Guard for over twenty years. I am also a full time Licensed Real Estate Professional.

The reason I would like to have a say in the matters at hand is I work in a profession that serves the public, and I see first hand how the conveyance tax is putting a burden on the active duty service members and the spouses of fallen soldiers.

The active duty member receives orders from the United States of America that they must move to a new location. When these orders are received we do not ask questions. It is a part of the job that we do in order to serve our country. There are many burdens on the part of the American family when it comes to a move. The active member may have to move ahead without family, and the spouse stays behind to sell a home or finish out the school year with children. The stress alone is enough for a person to handle while the serviceman is juggling two households to stay financially afloat.

Then the State of Connecticut has the extra burden of adding a conveyance tax to them when they are trying to sell a property, and in most cases at a loss. Most active duty members of the Armed Services move every to three to four years.

Many choose to purchases homes and become a vital part of the community. So, why are we penalizing them for doing their duty and supporting their local economy?

Here are a few examples. In March 2009 my clients, an active duty member of the United States Navy out of Groton Ct, received his orders to move. I listed his home on the market to sell (in a down market) at a loss in excess of \$50,000.00. He could not do a short sale on his home due to his security clearance with the Navy. He was not willing jeopardize his years in service or his ob.