



**Written Testimony of
Glenn Marshall, Commissioner
Department of Labor
Select Committee on Veterans' Affairs
February 28, 2012**

Good Afternoon Senator Leone, Representative Hennessy, Senator Welch, Representative Adinolfi and members of the Select Committee on Veterans' Affairs. Thank you for the opportunity to provide you with written testimony in support of **Senate Bill #251: AAC Veterans' Jobs**.

Helping Connecticut's returning veterans find employment is not a Republican problem nor is it a Democrat problem. It is Connecticut's problem. I strongly support this bill and I wish to commend this Committee for introducing such a valuable and timely piece of legislation. My agency is implementing the current Subsidized Training and Employment Program (STEP UP) authorized through Oct. Special Session Public Act #1: An Act Promoting Economic Growth and Job Creation in the State. For months, my staff has been marketing this program to employers and the employers are now beginning the process of hiring unemployed individuals under this program. Therefore, it is logical that the establishment of an Unemployed Armed Forces Member Subsidized Training and Employment program for eligible businesses also be administered by the Department of Labor as outlined in Senate Bill #251.

Unfortunately, the unemployment rate in Connecticut for these returning veterans is almost double the state unemployment rate. To address this situation, Senate Bill#: 251 proposes that a Connecticut-based business, that hires an unemployed veteran who has returned from Iraq or Afghanistan, is eligible to receive a wage subsidy for the first 6 months of the veteran's employment. The special wage subsidy dedicated solely to employers who hire unemployed Armed Forces members will entice employers to hire veterans, thus putting more unemployed Connecticut veterans back to work.

My Office for Veterans Workforce Development is in a unique position to be instrumental in the successful implementation of this proposed bill. That office assists veterans/covered persons with their employment and training needs to include:

- Job service assistance
- Referral to supportive services
- Intensive career services (case management)
- Job development
- State and federal program information/referral

Attached to my testimony is a more detailed fact sheet about the services provided by the Office for Veterans Workforce Development for your reference. I would like to bring to your attention on that fact sheet information regarding our **Heroes 4 Hire Job Fair** – the eighth such event held in this state – 11 a.m. to 3 p.m. Friday, April 27, Rentschler Field, East Hartford. This job fair is specifically geared for those who have served in the Armed Services, the Connecticut National Guard, and the Reserves. The **Heroes 4 Hire Job Fair** is co-sponsored by the Connecticut Veterans' Administration.

I would also like to testify in support of **H. B. #5297: AA Establishing a Task Force to Study the Substitution of State Licensing Requirements with Military Occupational Specialty Training for Veterans**. H.B.# 5297 places the Labor Commissioner on a task force to study the use of military occupational specialty training as a substitute for state licensing requirements. As the State of Connecticut's lead Workforce Development Agency, I have heard from many employers who want to hire veterans for a specific trade but since he or she does not have the required state license, are prohibited from doing so. This task force is a good first step toward examining which military occupational specialty training experience can be substituted for state licensing purposes. This too will go a long way toward helping Connecticut's returning veterans in securing employment.

Thank you for providing me the opportunity to submit this written testimony in support of S.B.# 251 and H.B.# 5297.



**Connecticut Department of Labor
Office for Veterans' Workforce Development (OVWD)**

Mission

The Office for Veterans' Workforce Development assists veterans/covered persons with their employment and training needs to include:

- Job service assistance
- Referral to supportive services
- Intensive career services (case management)
- Job development
- State and federal program information/referral

Local Veteran Employment Representative (LVER) Responsibilities:

- Establish, maintain, or facilitate regular contact with employers to develop employment and training opportunities for the benefit of veterans.
- Provide and facilitate a full range of employment and training services, as appropriate, to meet the needs of newly separated and other veterans in the workforce development system.
- Advocate for employment and training opportunities with business, industry, and community-based organizations on behalf of veterans.
- Ensure that veterans are provided the range of Labor Exchange Services needed to meet their employment and training needs. Work with other workforce development providers to develop their capacity to recognize, and respond to these needs.

Disabled Veteran Outreach Program (DVOP) Specialist Responsibilities:

- Facilitate intensive services to veterans with special employment and training needs, including/with emphasis on disabled, recently separated and campaign badge veterans
- Document all intensive services including assessment, career guidance, coordination with supportive services, referrals to jobs and training, and provision of job development contacts
- Conduct outreach activities with the purpose of locating veterans who could benefit from intensive services. Market these services to potential clients at locations where they are being served by other agencies
- Provide and facilitate a full range of Labor Exchange Services to include employment and training services to veterans with the primary focus of meeting the needs of those who are unable to obtain employment through core services

Intensive Services provided are but not limited to: Comprehensive and specialized assessments which may include diagnostic testing, in-depth interviewing, development of an individual employment plan, group, career planning, case management, and short-term prevocational services including development of learning skills, communication skills, interviewing skills, and professional conduct to prepare individuals for unsubsidized employment or training. Provide referrals to supportive services and guidance towards education. Assist with job searching, resume writing, interview techniques, and labor market information. Provide monthly follow-ups on veterans receiving intensive services. Provide information on all veteran benefits and

training. Inform veterans of their military skills that are transferable to civilian jobs. Identify barriers to employment through needs assessment. Inform veterans of job openings by working with Business Services Unit (BSU) and employers.

CT National Guard Mobilizations (Deployments)

In conjunction with the Yellow Ribbon Program, the OVWD provides regular briefings to deploying and returning soldiers and airmen of the CT National Guard, informing them of job service and unemployment insurance benefits.

Gold Card Initiative

On August 5, 2011, President Obama announced a comprehensive plan to lower veterans' unemployment and ensures that service members leave the military career-ready. The Gold Card provides unemployed post-9/11 era veterans with the intensive and follow-up services they need to succeed in today's job market.

The enhanced in-person services available for Gold Card holders at local One-Stop Career Centers may include:

- Job readiness assessment, including interviews and testing
- Development of an Individual Development Plan
- Career guidance through group or individual counseling that helps veterans in making training and career decisions
- Provision of labor market, occupational, and skills transferability information that inform educational, training, and occupational decisions
- Referral to job banks, job portals, and job openings
- Referral to employers and registered apprenticeship sponsors
- Referral to training by WIA-funded or third party service providers
- Monthly follow-up by an assigned case manager for six months

Heroes 4 Hire Career Fairs

The career fairs are aimed at veterans of the Air Force, Army, Coast Guard, Marines and Navy. The most recent event was in April, 2011, with over 1,300 veterans taking advantage of opportunities and services from more than 80 companies and community service organizations, along with the Labor Department's team of Nationally Certified Professional Résumé Writers.

The agency's career fairs first began in 2007. With this past event, more than 10,000 veterans have now attended the fairs. Sponsored by the Department of Labor, the Department of Veterans Affairs, the Connecticut Military Department, the U.S. Chamber of Commerce, Travelers, the Connecticut Business and Industry Association and CBS Radio, the event broke all previous attendance records.

The next event is scheduled for Friday, April 27, 2012 at Rentschler Field in East Hartford from 11 a.m. to 3 p.m.