



CT DOL Testimony in support of concepts in Raised Bill 212, Raised Bill 213 and Raised Bill 5299

Good afternoon Senator Leone, Representative Hennessy and members of the CT Legislature's Veterans Affairs Committee. My name is Terrence Brennan and I am the Director of the Office for Veterans' Workforce Development (OVWD) within the Connecticut Department of Labor and I am presenting testimony today on behalf of CT Department of Labor Commissioner Sharon Palmer.

The CTDOL supports the concepts in Raised Bill 212 AAC Implementation of the Recommendations of the Military Occupational Specialty Task Force; raised Bill 213 AAC The Veteran's Opportunities Pilot Program; and raised Bill 5299 AAC The Findings of the Military Occupational Specialty task Force.

It is our position that these Raised Bills will go far toward meeting the various employment, training and housing needs of our Veterans. I want to recommend a clarification and adjustments to these Raised Bills.

Senate Raised Bill 212 & House Raised Bill 5299: An Act Concerning Implementation of the Recommendations of the Military Occupational Specialty Task Force: 95% of this proposed legislation deals with, and is relevant to, veterans' employment and training which under Title 38 – specifically chapters 41 and 42 and USC 38 Codes of Federal Regulations – falls under the jurisdiction of CTDOL OVWD. The Task Force relied heavily on CTDOL OVWD's professional opinions, suggestions and recommendations.

The Military Occupational Specialty Task Force Committee report sent to the Veterans Affairs Committee had the Connecticut Department of Labor Office for Veterans' Workforce Development (CTDOL OVWD) responsible for working with state agencies and educational institutions to ensure that veterans' military training and experience applies for occupational licensing and certifications. This is not clear in the language of the Raised Bill.

CTDOL Office of Veterans' Workforce Development is mandated under Title 38 USC to provide employment and training services for the State of Connecticut. It should also be noted that the CTDOL Office of Apprenticeship Training serves as an integral part of veterans' employment and training and CTDOL OVWD Employment Specialists, who are trained at the National Veterans Training Institute at the University of Colorado, are mandated to provide employment training and intensive services to all eligible veterans. Therefore it is our position that CTDOL should be the lead agency as recommended in the original report to take any steps necessary to ensure that state agencies recognize and accept military training and experience when a veteran applies for an occupational license, and that the spouses of veterans are provided with automatic temporary occupational licenses, including temporary certifications for teachers.

Line 20 pertaining to military training implies an acceptance of military training, qualifications and certifications for a "national" accelerated course is a conflict for CT Peace Officer Standards and Training (POST) requirements...in other words the CT POST council has no such mechanism in place as our state's certification process works in the opposite order when compared to other parts of the nation. The language, as it reads in this bill, requires that CT POST council establish a policy to recognize and accept relevant and equivalent military law enforcement training. Representatives from the CT POST council have made mention that such policy does not exist at the moment, although they have been in contact with other states to observe their practice of accepting military training, certifications and qualifications. Again, in other states candidates pay their own way through the police academy (allows veterans to use the GI Bill) and after successful completion of said academy and training, the candidate is eligible to apply for police departments.

Throughout this proposed legislation, the term "discharged honorably, honorably separated, separated honorably or honorably discharged" should be accompanied with "or discharged, or separated under honorable conditions." This will narrow the character of discharge to a more specific language (metaphorically it's the difference between getting an A and A+) although both are satisfactory performance measurements.

Line 212 through 214 pertaining to the waiver of equivalent military training for security officer's license also known as the CT Guard Card should include language identifying a time frame from separation of service to application for said license. Also, we recommend the waiver of any and all fees for such training costs and application process.

Lines 370-374 would make more regulatory and procedural sense if it fell under CTDOL OVWD since we are specifically funded for employment services and training.

We support the concept in raised Bill 213 AAC The Veterans Opportunities Pilot Program and look forward to its passage and implementation.

Thank you for your time and I'm happy to respond to any questions.