

TESTAMONY BY JOHN C LEBLANC  
Department of Connecticut  
Veterans of Foreign Wars  
To Veterans Affairs Committee  
Relating to SB 293

Good afternoon Ladies and Gentlemen. Thank you for the opportunity to speak to you today. My name is John Leblanc and I am the State Inspector of the Connecticut Veterans of Foreign Wars. Bob Frolick, our State Commander had planned to address you today but, unfortunately, is in Washington attending a national conference. I am here as his representative today.

The issue before us today concerns changes to State Liquor Regulations as it relates to guest book requirements. SB 293, which the Connecticut Veterans of Foreign Wars supports, is the bill being considered.

Three sections of Title 30 relate to club members and guest book requirements.

One defines members, and I'll paraphrase here without all the legalese, as individuals who have a voice in the election of club officers and in the operation of the club. Guest book requirements specify that anyone not a member of the club must be properly signed in on the guest book.

These regulations are considered to require VFW members visiting a post that is not their home post, to be signed in as a guest. No different than anyone else. The current statues look at our organization as 118 individual entities, all regulated by the same provisions. In one way we are that. 118 individually chartered posts, each unique in its existence. In many ways though, and how we look at it, we are 118 members of one family – the Department of Connecticut.

Looking back a moment to how the law defines a member, there is a lot of room for differing interpretations. SB 293 will clarify and standardize the issue. Some clubs take a narrow view and require any VFW member not of that post to

sign in. Others take a broader view that any VFW member has membership privileges in any post.

We believe, and would like SB 293 adopted, in the broader view of membership.

Say, for example, I visit the post in Devon. My home post is 201 in Waterbury. I may be required to sign in as a guest. Here's the catch though. I am a District officer, elected, in part by the Devon post. In that capacity I have a voice in Devon post operations. I am also a State Officer and as such, I have a voice in the operation of all posts throughout the state. Therefore, I have input and influence on the operation of posts not my home post.

Each and every member within the state actually has, through their VFW membership, a voice in club operations at these three different levels. At their post directly, at District level and at State level. All have the right to run for office at all levels.

With this in mind, every member can be deemed to qualify, at any post, as a regular member, regardless of home post affiliation.

Thank you for your time and consideration of this issue. Please pass SB 293.