



March 5, 2014

The Honorable Carlo Leone
The Honorable Jack Hennessy
Co-Chairs
Veterans' Affairs Committee
Room 509A, Capitol
Hartford, CT 06106

Dear Senator Leone and Representative Hennessy:

On behalf of the Connecticut Heroes Project, I write to express my support of SB-0213, An Act Concerning The Veterans' Opportunities Pilot Program.

Our organization is dedicated to ending homelessness among Veterans in Connecticut by 2015, and our strategic plan to achieve that mission identifies intensive employment services — like those described in SB-0213 — as one of the most critical gaps in the current network of services for Veterans experiencing homelessness. Veterans bring tremendous potential skills to the workforce, and many of the Veterans experiencing homelessness are fully able and willing to go back to work. However, while Connecticut has done an admirable job placing homeless Veterans in permanent housing, there remains room for improvement in connecting those Veterans with the employment supports they need to find and hold a steady job. With the support of employment specialists trained in the unique employment barriers faced by Veterans, and with the support of a coordinator making the missed connections between Veterans, employment staff, employers, and job subsidies, these men and women who have served our country will finally be able to find steady employment and escape their homelessness for good.

We are extremely grateful to the Veterans' Affairs Committee for proposing the bill and raising awareness of the particular barriers to employment that continue to face Veterans in Connecticut. We urge the committee and legislature to vote in favor of SB-0213.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "G. Zucker". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a long horizontal stroke at the end.

Gabriel Zucker
Associate Director, CT Heroes Project