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February 17, 2015

***TESTIMONY ON BEHALF OF THE NATIONAL GUARD ASSOCIATION OF
CONNECTICUT BEFORE THE VETERANS AFFAIRS COMMITTEE ON
PSB 520, AAC MILITARY RETIREMENT PAY.***

GOOD AFTERNOON. SOME OF YOU MAY RECOGNIZE ME (REP NICASTRRO?) AS I HAVE BEEN BEFORE THIS LEGISLATURE IN ONE CAPACITY OR ANOTHER FOR 38 YEARS. I WAS FIRST ELECTED TO THE CT LEGISLATURE IN 1976 AND SERVED THREE TERMS REPRESENTING THE 56TH DISTRICT IN VERNON FOR SIX YEARS. OTHERS WHO HAVE REPRESENTED THE 56TH WERE JOE COURTNEY AND NOW CLAIRE JANOWSKI. I ALSO SERVED AS THE LEGISLATIVE PROJECT MANAGER FOR THE FORMER DPUC RETIREING IN 2001. PRESENTLY I SERVE AS THE LEGISLATIVE CHAIRMAN FOR THE CT CSEA COUNCIL 400 RETIRED STATE EMPLOYEES. FINALLY I RETIRED IN 1997 WITH 30 YEARS OF SERVICE WITH THE CT ARMY NATIONAL GUARD. AS BOTH A MEMBER OF THE LEGISLATURE AND THE GUARD, I INTRODUCED AND SECURED PASSAGE OF "FREE TUITION FOR CT NATIONAL GUARD MEN AND WOMEN AT STATE COLLEGES". OVER THE YEARS MY SON AND THREE GRANDCHILDREN HAVE TAKEN ADVATAGE OF THIS LEGISLATION (AND ALL ARE STILL ACTIVE).

AND NOW I'M BAAAAACKK BEFORE YOU AFTER TEN YEARS ON A SIMILAR BUT EXPANDED PROPOSED BILL. I THEN TESTIFIED ON SB-1030 ON ST PATRICKS DAY IN 2005 WHICH EXEMPTED 50% OF FEDERALLY TAXABLE MILITARY RETIREMENT PAY FROM STATE INCOME TAX. FOR MY ABRIDGED TESTIMONY OF THAT DAY AND OTHERS IS DOCUMENTED ON THE REVERSE.

(OVER)

Abridgment of 2005 Testimony Given On SB-1030 - March 17, 2005



“Chester Morgan, Legislative Liaison for the National Guard Association of Connecticut testified before the committee in support of the bill. He presented similar statistical information as provided by Ms. Newton and offered that it would be an additional tool for recruitment of personnel for the Connecticut National Guard, particularly with regard to servicemen leaving active duty with a branch of the U.S. armed forces. Passage would further recognize their service to our state and country”.

Also testifying was:

“Debbi Newton, President Elect and Legislative Chairman for the National Guard Association of Connecticut, testified before the committee in support of this bill. She offered that sixteen states currently exempt 100% of military retirement pay from their state income tax. She said that seven states have no income tax at all and twenty additional states offer some type of state income tax exemption for retired military personnel; and Connecticut is one of only eleven states that do not provide state income tax exemption benefits for retired military”.

“Linda Spoonster Schwartz, RN, D.Ph., Commissioner of the Department of Veterans Affairs testified before the committee in support of the bill. In her oral presentation, she reflected the position that a 100% tax exemption would be nice, but that 50% was a good start. Commissioner Schwartz expressed the opinion that Connecticut is a relatively expensive state to live in and that the retirement income of lower pay grade military personnel is not that high to begin with”.

“Governor Rell did not appear before the committee, however, the Governor’s proposed budget and her remarks in her presentation to the General Assembly reflected support for the 50% deferral represented in this bill”.

ALL ARE STILL APPROPRIATE TO TODAY’S PROPOSED BILL

Chet

SGM (Ret.) Chester W Morgan