

Good Afternoon, Chairpersons and Veterans Committee, want to thank you for taking your time to hear me. My name is Rusty Meek of Manchester, Connecticut.

I belong to Veterans of Foreign Wars, American Legion, DAV, Sub Vets and several other organizations, but I'm speaking for myself and a few other retirees.

I'm in support of all these bills, especially Bills SB 520, SB 526 and HJ 48.

Bill SB 520, An Act Concerning Military Retirement Pay. I have testified on this bill before, but it seems that, If a bill for veterans has money attached to it, you or someone else kills it. Right now, this state is loosing valuable members of our retired Veterans community. These retirees are in their early 40 to late 60, all qualified to handle a job or teach the younger people of Connecticut. All skills are up to date, because the services make sure that they are up to date. But I know, even at 71 year old I can't find a job because people think I'm to old. Prices keep going up every year 5 of 10 percent, and the government cost of living goes up 2% and they think they are doing something for us. It's OK to give millions to a country who later on life is going to attack us and kills our men and women in uniform. I know that I have look at other states, like Florida, to live in, my son want me to move down their, cost of living in a lot cheaper than living in Connecticut. I've looked at Maine, again cost of living is lower and the cold is not so damp. Every time you turn around, this state is doing something to the Veterans Community. I personality, know of several retired members and their families, who have moved to Florida. My class from Manchester High School, Class of 1961,(871 students), we have class reunion, in Connecticut. But in Florida they also have one, about 125 people attend.

If this bill go through I will save in taxes about \$650, from my retirement pay. This in some case goes a long way, being single, shopping at the Sub Base, I can buy about 4 or 5 months worth of groceries. When we joined the service, we signed a contract and a blank check. Ryan Deon check was cashed for one leg, Gary Cussin had his check cashed, one life. My they never cashed. I heard the VA talk before a committee that 10% of Americans are Vets. Well that lady was WRONG, 1% of Americans are Veterans and keep you safe, with no questions asked.

I ask you to please, think of these men and women, who did their jobs. The least you can do is to give them a tax break. Thank You