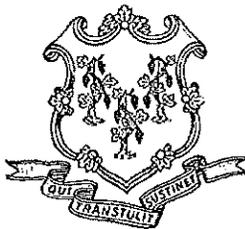


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General Law

**Testimony to the Veterans' Affairs Committee**

**Proposed Senate Bill 520 An Act Concerning Military Retirement Pay**

**February 17, 2015**

Chairman Flexer, Chairman Hennessey, and distinguished members of the Veterans' Affairs Committee, thank you for the opportunity to offer this testimony in support of SB 520 An Act Concerning Military Retirement Pay. This legislation seeks to increase the State's income tax exemption on federally taxable military retirement pay from the current rate of 50% to 100%.

Sixteen states currently have a full exemption on their income tax for military retirement pay including our neighboring states of Massachusetts, New York, and New Jersey. I am proud to have advocated for the current partial tax exemption as a past chair of this committee. This law has been a successful way to recognize veterans for their service and provide needed economic security for seniors on fixed incomes and incentive for those transitioning from military to civilian life to start a family here. Our state's retention of military personnel is critical not just for the job training and experience retirees have but for the values of community service and commitment to a better quality of life they and their families share. Many of our state's initiatives toward job creation have focused on a highly skilled, well educated workforce. Military retirees offer that background and a state like Connecticut – one with deep military roots – should expand our investment in those men and women.

With our economy moving forward, I believe now is the time to make full exemption of military retirement pay available. From the Greatest Generation to the Millennials returning home from Iraq and Afghanistan, this legislation will bring additional relief to the economic challenges veterans face. I ask that the Veterans' Affairs Committee consider a favorable report of the bill out of committee.

Thank you for your consideration.

Respectfully submitted,

State Senator Gayle Slossberg