



House of Representatives

General Assembly

File No. 69

February Session, 2016

Substitute House Bill No. 5354

House of Representatives, March 21, 2016

The Committee on Veterans' Affairs reported through REP. HENNESSY of the 127th Dist., Chairperson of the Committee on the part of the House, that the substitute bill ought to pass.

AN ACT CONCERNING SERVICE BONUSES FOR CERTAIN MEMBERS OF THE CONNECTICUT NATIONAL GUARD AND ARMED FORCES.

Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives in General Assembly convened:

1 Section 1. Section 27-61a of the general statutes is repealed and the
2 following is substituted in lieu thereof (*Effective July 1, 2016*):

3 (a) (1) As used in subsection (b) of this section, "eligible member or
4 veteran" means a member or former member of the Connecticut
5 National Guard who [(1)] (A) is or was called to active service on or
6 after September 11, 2001, [(2)] (B) is or was in such active service for at
7 least ninety consecutive days, and [(3)] (C) if discharged, is or was
8 honorably discharged or discharged for injuries sustained in the line of
9 duty.

10 (2) As used in subsection (c) of this section, "eligible member or
11 veteran" means a member or former member of the armed forces, as
12 defined in subsection (a) of section 27-103, other than the Connecticut

13 National Guard, who (A) is or was called to active service on or after
14 September 11, 2001, (B) is or was in such active service for at least
15 ninety consecutive days, and (C) if discharged, is or was honorably
16 discharged or discharged for injuries sustained in the line of duty.

17 (b) (1) On and after July 1, 2005, the Adjutant General shall pay each
18 eligible member or veteran the amount of fifty dollars for each month
19 or major part thereof of active service by such eligible member or
20 veteran on or after September 11, 2001.

21 [On and before June 30, 2007] (2) (A) Prior to July 1, 2007, the
22 maximum payment to any eligible member or veteran shall not exceed
23 five hundred dollars.

24 [(2)] (B) On and after July 1, 2007, the maximum payment to any
25 eligible member or veteran under this subsection shall not exceed five
26 hundred dollars, except that such maximum payment shall not exceed
27 one thousand two hundred dollars if, during such active service, such
28 eligible member or veteran is or was deployed to an area designated as
29 a combat zone by the President of the United States.

30 (3) No payment shall be made under this subsection to any eligible
31 member or veteran who makes application for such payment later than
32 three years after the date of the cessation of such operations in which
33 such member or veteran served.

34 (c) (1) On and after July 1, 2016, the Adjutant General shall pay each
35 eligible member or veteran the amount of fifty dollars for each month
36 or major part thereof of active service by such eligible member or
37 veteran on or after September 11, 2001, if, during such active service,
38 such eligible member or veteran is or was deployed to an area
39 designated as a combat zone by the President of the United States. The
40 maximum payment to any eligible member or veteran under this
41 subsection shall not exceed six hundred dollars.

42 (2) No payment shall be made under this subsection to any eligible
43 member or veteran who makes application for such payment later than

44 three years after the date of the cessation of such operations in which
45 such member or veteran served.

46 [(c)] (d) The Adjutant General, in consultation with the
47 Commissioner of Veterans' Affairs, shall adopt regulations, in
48 accordance with the provisions of chapter 54, to implement the
49 provisions of this section. Such regulations shall include procedures
50 for verification of eligibility of an eligible member or veteran and for
51 the application for and payment of the amounts specified in this
52 section.

This act shall take effect as follows and shall amend the following sections:		
Section 1	July 1, 2016	27-61a

Statement of Legislative Commissioners:

In Subsec. (b)(2)(B), "and prior to July 1, 2016," was deleted for accuracy.

VA *Joint Favorable Subst.*

The following Fiscal Impact Statement and Bill Analysis are prepared for the benefit of the members of the General Assembly, solely for purposes of information, summarization and explanation and do not represent the intent of the General Assembly or either chamber thereof for any purpose. In general, fiscal impacts are based upon a variety of informational sources, including the analyst's professional knowledge. Whenever applicable, agency data is consulted as part of the analysis, however final products do not necessarily reflect an assessment from any specific department.

OFA Fiscal Note

State Impact:

Agency Affected	Fund-Effect	FY 17 \$	FY 18 \$
Military Dept.	GF - Cost	539,000	60,000

Note: GF=General Fund

Municipal Impact: None

Explanation

The bill results in an FY 17 cost of \$539,000 to the Military Department by allowing members of the Connecticut National Guard who have served in presidentially declared combat zones to receive a one-time additional \$600 payment. Approximately 600 veterans qualify for past service for full payments, and an additional 600 qualify for reduced payments. Additionally, there are 65 current National Guard members serving in combat zones that are projected to qualify in FY 17, and additional 100 in FY 18.

The Out Years

The annualized ongoing fiscal impact identified above would continue into the future subject to inflation.

OLR Bill Analysis**sHB 5354*****AN ACT CONCERNING SERVICE BONUSES FOR CERTAIN MEMBERS OF THE CONNECTICUT NATIONAL GUARD AND ARMED FORCES.*****SUMMARY:**

This bill establishes a bonus program for members or former members of the armed forces (U.S. Army, Navy, Marine Corps, Coast Guard, Air Force, or their reserve components), other than the National Guard, called to active service on or after September 11, 2001. The bonus is \$50 for each month of active service or major part thereof, up to a maximum of \$600 for such members who (1) are or were in active service for at least 90 consecutive days; (2) while in such service, are or were deployed in a combat zone designated by the president; and (3) if discharged, were honorably discharged or discharged because of a line-of-duty injury.

The member or former member has three years after the end of the operation in which he or she served to apply for the bonus. The adjutant general must begin making the payments on July 1, 2016. He, in consultation with the veterans' affairs commissioner, must adopt implementing regulations that include application, eligibility verification, and payment procedures.

By law, a bonus program exists for current or former Connecticut National Guard members who serve or served in combat zones on or after September 11, 2001.

EFFECTIVE DATE: July 1, 2016

COMMITTEE ACTION

Veterans' Affairs Committee

Joint Favorable Substitute

Yea 13 Nay 0 (03/03/2016)