OLR Bill Analysis
sSB 968

AN ACT ESTABLISHING A MILITARY TO MACHINISTS PROGRAM FOR VETERANS.

SUMMARY
This bill establishes a Military to Machinists program in the Department of Labor (DOL). Within the department’s existing resources, the program must help veterans to:

1. earn an advanced manufacturing certificate from a qualifying certificate program (see below) of a public institution of higher education and

2. secure employment, for certificate holders, with any eligible business in the advanced manufacturing field.

Under the bill, an “eligible business” is a business that operates in Connecticut, has been registered to conduct business for at least 12 months, and is in good standing regarding all state and local tax payments. It does not include the state or any of its political subdivisions.

The bill requires the DOL commissioner to designate employees from the department’s Office for Veterans Workforce Development to act as liaisons to assist (1) veterans in obtaining funding and (2) eligible businesses in applying for grants and tax credits.

It also requires DOL, within existing resources and in conjunction with the departments of Veterans Affairs and Economic and Community Development, to develop or approve an informational campaign on the program annually, starting January 1, 2020.

Under the bill, a veteran is anyone honorably discharged from or released under honorable conditions from active service in the armed
forces (CGS § 27-103(a)). “Armed forces” means the U.S. Army, Navy, Marines, Coast Guard, Air Force, or any reserve component, including the National Guard performing duty under Title 32 of federal law (e.g., certain Homeland Security missions).

EFFECTIVE DATE: October 1, 2019

MILITARY TO MACHINISTS PROGRAM

Advanced Manufacturing

Under the bill, "advanced manufacturing" means a manufacturing process that makes extensive use of computer, high-precision or information technologies integrated with a high-performance workforce in a production system capable of furnishing a diverse mix of products in small or large volumes with either the efficiency of mass production or the flexibility of custom manufacturing in order to respond quickly to customer demands. It includes new ways to manufacture existing products and the manufacture of new products emerging from new advanced technologies.

Qualifying Advanced Manufacturing Certificate Program

Under the bill, a “qualifying advanced manufacturing certificate program" is a for-credit or noncredit sub-baccalaureate advanced manufacturing certificate program offered by a public institution of higher education in which at least 75% of the graduates of the program are employed in a field related to or requiring such certificate in the year following graduation.

Office for Veterans Workforce Development Liaisons

The DOL commissioner must designate as many employees as he deems appropriate from the department's Office for Veterans Workforce Development to act as liaisons to assist veterans on behalf of the program.

The liaisons must help veterans obtain funding for the cost of attending a public institution of higher education's qualifying advanced manufacturing certificate program. Such funding includes accessing existing tuition waivers for veterans and assistance from the
Workforce Training Authority Fund.

The liaisons must also help eligible businesses apply (1) to DOL for a grant to subsidize on-the-job training and compensation for new employees (Unemployed Armed Forces STEP Program) and (2) for tax credits for apprenticeship training in manufacturing, construction, and plastic-related trades, if applicable.

**Informational Campaign**

The annual informational campaign must:

1. describe the program,

2. address the various opportunities and benefits the program provides for veterans in the state, and

3. be distributed to qualified veterans’ charitable organizations and Operation Academic Support for Incoming Service Members centers (See BACKGROUND).

**BACKGROUND**

**Veterans’ Charitable Organizations**

By law, a “qualified veterans’ charitable organization” is one that: (1) holds itself out to be established for any benevolent, educational, philanthropic, humane, scientific, patriotic, social welfare, or advocacy purpose relating to or on behalf of veterans; and (2) has been a Connecticut nonstock corporation for three or more years or a 501(c) tax exempt organization for three or more consecutive years. The Veterans Affairs Department maintains and publishes a list of qualified veterans' charitable organizations.

**COMMITTEE ACTION**

Veterans' Affairs Committee

Joint Favorable
Yea 16  Nay 0  (03/12/2019)