

From: Vincent Santilli (vsantilli@homesforthebrave.org)

Sent: 2019/04/26

To: Sean Scanlon, Douglas McCrory, Jason Rojas, Devin Carney, Rick Lopes, Robert Sanchez, Russell Morin, Holly Cheeseman, Christopher Davis, Larry Butler, Emil Altobello, Hilda Santiago, Mary Mushinsky, Vincent Candelora, Roland Lemar, Alphonse Paolillo, John Fonfara, Kevin Witkos, George Logan, Marilyn Moore, Carlo Leone, Henri Martin, Joshua Elliott, David Yaccarino, Stephen Cassano, Laura Devlin, Chris Perone, Livvy Floren, Nicole Klarides-Ditria, John Frey, Jason Perillo, Joseph Gresko, David Rutigliano, Steven Stafstrom, Jack Hennessy, Brenda Kupchick, Terrie Wood, Patricia Billie Miller, Joseph Polletta, Julio Concepcion, James Maroney, Norman Needleman, Jason Doucette, Kerry Wood, Jill Barry, Stephen Meskers, Quentin Phipps, Leslee Hill

Subject: Oppose the 25% Property Tax on Nonprofits with Savings Accounts (S.B. 1137 & S.B. 1138)

Dear [recipient's salutation and name],

April 26, 2019

State of Connecticut

Finance, Revenue and Bonding Committee

Dear Senator Fonfara, Senator Witkos, Representative Davis, Representative Rojas and Committee Members,

As a Bridgeport, CT based non-profit, ABRI doing business as Homes for the Brave, serves homeless men and women, primarily Veterans with transitional (and nine units of permanent as well) housing, case management, life skills coaching, vocational assistance and clinical services. Today, we are testifying on S.B. 1137, AN ACT CONCERNING DEPOSITS IN LIEU OF TAXES and S.B. 1138, AN ACT CONCERNING COMMUNITY RESTORATION FUNDS.

In an environment in which state and federal support, especially for transitional housing for Veterans, has diminished, we are challenged to continue to provide services to homeless Veterans, including a drop-in, walk-in Veterans Service Center, which offers computer classes, job prep workshops, life skills seminars, therapy dog visits and movie showings. Yet, in just the last two budget cycles, we have encountered a loss of \$181,000 in operating funding (to transitional housing providers for adults) from the State of Connecticut Department of Housing. This past summer, we also experienced the permanent decline of the chiller unit and major HVAC hardware in our men's transitional house. Therefore, our HVAC system is undergoing a major replacement to the tune of \$79,000 and we are raising the funds privately to complete the work in the next few weeks.

These proposals would result in a "tax" on our 42 bed men's transitional house and our 14 bed house that is exclusively for female Veterans and their young children, the only one of its kind in Connecticut or its surrounding states. Estimating the property tax on these properties if we were not tax-exempt, it would most likely be north of \$60,000 with 25% of that being well into the five figures, adding to what already is projected to be a significant 2020 budget deficit for us. This will jeopardize if not close several of our programs that serve the men and women that have served our nation.

On behalf of our Board, Staff and the Male and Female Veterans that we serve, we respectfully urge you to take no action on these proposals.

Sincerely,

Vincent Santilli
Chief Executive Officer

Sincerely,
Vincent Santilli
655 Park Avenue, Bridgeport, CT, 06604

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