

Veterans' Affairs Committee JOINT FAVORABLE REPORT

Bill No.: SB-802

AN ACT PROVIDING FOR DISCOUNTED FISHING LICENSES FOR CERTAIN

Title: VETERANS.

Vote Date: 2/19/2019

Vote Action: Joint Favorable

PH Date: 2/14/2019

File No.:

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SPONSORS OF BILL:

Veterans' Affairs Committee
Sen. Carlo Leone, 27th Dist.

REASONS FOR BILL:

This bill would reduce fees for sport fishing licenses, permits, tags, or stamps by 50% for any Connecticut resident who is a veteran with a service-connected disability rating by the US Department of Veterans' Affairs of at least ten per cent total disability. It was proposed to mirror similar bills in other states, to provide veterans with additional tools to overcome PTSD, and to assist in rehabilitation and healing from their experiences in service.

RESPONSE FROM ADMINISTRATION/AGENCY:

None expressed for S.B. No. 802

NATURE AND SOURCES OF SUPPORT:

[K. Robert Lewis, Chairman, The American Legion Department of Connecticut Legislative Committee](#): Mr. Lewis noted that discounted fishing licenses are a benefit, and that the American Legion supports the implementation of such a benefit.

[Antoinette Spinelli, President, Connecticut Town Clerks Association](#): Mr. Spinelli testified that while the Connecticut Town Clerks Association supports the legislation, the CTCA recommends that all veterans, rather than only those who are disabled, be eligible for free or discounted fishing licenses. The CTCA contends that proof of status as a veteran should be enough, and that veterans should not be required to disclose a confidential medical diagnosis in order to obtain a free or discounted fishing license. Furthermore, Mr. Spinelli noted, the

need to disclose such a diagnosis might act as a deterrence for eligible veterans who would otherwise have taken advantage of the opportunity.

[Daniel C. Thurston, Chairman, Connecticut Veterans and Military Coalition](#): Mr. Thurston testified that S.B. No. 802 was a “positive step in the right direction.”

NATURE AND SOURCES OF OPPOSITION:

None expressed for S.B. No. 802

Reported by: Benjamin S. Watson, Asst. Clerk Date: February 25, 2019