

Veterans' Affairs Committee JOINT FAVORABLE REPORT

Bill No.: HB-6483

AN ACT CONCERNING THE ENROLLMENT OF CHILDREN OF MEMBERS OF
THE ARMED FORCES IN PUBLIC SCHOOLS AND THE ESTABLISHMENT OF

Title: A PURPLE STAR SCHOOL PROGRAM.

Vote Date: 3/18/2021

Vote Action: Joint Favorable Substitute

PH Date: 2/23/2021

File No.: 267

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SPONSORS OF BILL:

Veterans' Affairs Committee
Rep. Christine Conley, 40th Dist.
Rep. Patrick S. Boyd, 50th Dist.

REASONS FOR BILL:

This bill allows military orders to be accepted as proof of residency for children in military families and establishes a Purple Star School Program that offers targeted supports to military-connected students. As military service members are routinely reassigned to new duty stations in the summer, it is crucial for families to be able to register their children in the appropriate school system using the information they have available at the time, so that the children can begin school on time. To assist with these transitions, sending a military-connected child to a Purple Star School lets them know that the school is equipped to support the social and emotional wellbeing of children adjusting to new schools and the absence of a parent during deployment.

In addition, when determining federal funding awards, the Department of Defense considers factors including military student transition procedures. This bill increases potential federal funding to defense facilities and programs in Connecticut.

***Proposed Substitute Language: In line 14, strike "and" and insert in lieu thereof "or" so that families do not have to provide both military orders directing the service member to the state and documents Boards of Education may require, but only one or the other.

RESPONSE FROM ADMINISTRATION/AGENCY:

None expressed.

NATURE AND SOURCES OF SUPPORT:

[Christopher R. Arnold, Northeast Region Liaison, United States Department of Defense-State Liaison Office](#): Support for this bill was expressed in written and spoken testimony. Testimony focused on the how this legislation is in line with Department of Defense best practices and is crucial to supporting military families. He stated, "with each move, military service members face numerous challenges as they bring their spouses and children to resettle into new communities and attend new schools. Mobile military students face issues such as gaps and overlaps in curriculum, different graduation requirements, course placement disruption, and many other hurdles when changing schools. Besides the academic issues, these students also face social and emotional challenges of relocation, such as leaving supportive social networks and activities, to start new again."

[John L. Ballantyne, Colonel, US Army \(Retired\), Senior Vice President and Chief Operating Officer, Military Child Education Coalition](#): Support from this bill was expressed in written testimony and focused on the Purple Star Schools portion of the legislation. He referenced a study that was done by the Center for Public Research and Leadership at Columbia University, which found that the Purple Star Schools Program in its first three years has "already gained traction and motivated hundreds of schools and scores of districts to improve services for military-connected students and families."

NATURE AND SOURCES OF OPPOSITION:

None expressed

Reported by: Erica Byrne, Clerk

Date: March 25, 2021