

General Law Committee JOINT FAVORABLE REPORT

Bill No.: SB-263

AN ACT CONCERNING CLUB PERMIT AND NONPROFIT CLUB PERMIT

Title: FEES.

Vote Date: 2/2/2021

Vote Action: Joint Favorable

PH Date: 1/28/2021

File No.: 6

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SPONSORS OF BILL:

General Law Committee

REASONS FOR BILL:

In July,2020 there was a substantial increase for permit holders under club permit/nonprofit club permit to \$2,000. This bill will give financial relief to those who previously held this club permit/nonprofit club permit at a much lower permit fee.

The fee will be reduced from \$2,000 to \$815; anyone who paid the higher fee will receive a refund if they paid in excess of \$815.00

RESPONSE FROM ADMINISTRATION/AGENCY:

None Expressed

NATURE AND SOURCES OF SUPPORT:

Berdon, Peter A., Berdon, Young, & Margolis, P.C., Attorneys and Counselors at Law

Mr Berdon wrote in support of this bill with an amendment to include manufacturers of beer and beer pubs. His request is written in detail in this testimony.

Ferraro, Charles J. Representative, State of CT, House of Representatives

The increased fee to \$2,000.00 would cause many of these non-profits/club owners to shutter their doors. Many of these non-profits contribute to their communities and provide much needed charity work.

Flowers, Thomas C., Chief Master Sargeant, US Air Force, Retired, Chairman, Legislative Affairs, The American Legion, Department of CT

The American Legion exists to serve out veterans, their family members, and their direct descendants of eligible wars. We sponsor many community programs. We believe that SB263 appropriately classifies our lounges and the \$815.00 is an appropriate charge for the permit.

Formica, Paul R. Senator, State of Connecticut, Senate

Senator Formica supports this bill, however would like the fee to be reduced further. The fee increased to \$2,000 in 2020 was between double and quadruple that these clubs/non-profits were charged. Small operations whose bottom lines could be made or broken by the difference in these permitting fees.

Hansen, Jr. Harry R., Department Adjunct, American Legion, Department of CT

Most of the members of the American Legion are Post members. Legion Posts are not operated for a profit. The canteens are often places members can have a place to go and socialize with fellow veterans, share stories and talk about veteran issues in an environment that they feel safe. Almost all posts are operating on tight budgets and one has sold their post home. Please support SB263.

House Republican Office, State of Connecticut

A similar bill was proposed by the House Republican Caucus HB5891 on this issue. This committee bill goes one step further and asks for restitution for those clubs that have already paid the \$2,000.00 and the House Republican office whole heartedly supports this addition. This bill has broad support from both sides and we appreciate a fast track to having this bill sent to the floor for a vote.

Murray, Charlie, USSVI-Groton Base Treasurer/Secretary

We support this bill; but would like the fee to be returned to the original charge of \$400.00. We are not a business, but a place where veterans can go to meet and socialize. The \$2,000 has many thinking they may have to close their doors. Please support this bill with the above change.

Ricard, Steven, USSVI-Groton Base Membership Chair, First and Finest

We are asking you support this bill; but return the fee to the \$400.00. Though we could make the \$815.00 if necessary, the increase would be difficult due to the restrictions and closing from COVID-19. Veteran's organizations like ours currently have very little income coming in. Please support this bill at the \$400.00 fee.

Sabio, James, President, Connecticut Elks Association

The Elks works with many volunteers and has very few employees. We do have overhead, which includes buildings and property taxes. The lodges of CT for the year ending March 31, 2020 donated in cash and in-kind donations \$600,000. The CT Elks strongly believes that this \$2,000 should be eliminated for all non-profit organizations current or in the future.

Sampson, Rob, State Senator, State of Connecticut, Senate

This bill is supported as it will reduce the cost for these local public, private and non-profit clubs in the State of CT. The cost increase has put many of these businesses in jeopardy of closing or drastically alter their business their business activities. We in CT should at this time foster a business environment.

Somers, Heather, Senator, State of Connecticut, Senate

Senator Somers supports this bill. This bill addresses concerns that I have been hearing from my constituents. In Eastern Connecticut, there are several clubs which are made up of community -minded veterans who have served our nation with honor. These clubs are already having difficulty making ends meet. The social and supportive network many of our citizens rely on should not be lost, as well as their historical implications.

NATURE AND SOURCES OF OPPOSITION:

None Expressed

Reported by: Bonnie Gray, Asst. Clerk

Date: 03/01/2021