



# House of Representatives

General Assembly

**File No. 19**

January Session, 2023

House Bill No. 5205

*House of Representatives, March 7, 2023*

The Committee on Veterans' and Military Affairs reported through REP. NOLAN of the 39th Dist., Chairperson of the Committee on the part of the House, that the bill ought to pass.

## ***AN ACT CONCERNING VETERANS AND THE PASSPORT TO THE PARKS MOTOR VEHICLE REGISTRATION FEE.***

Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives in General Assembly convened:

1 Section 1. Subsection (b) of section 14-49b of the general statutes is  
2 repealed and the following is substituted in lieu thereof (*Effective July 1,*  
3 *2023*):

4 (b) For each new registration or renewal of registration of any motor  
5 vehicle with the Commissioner of Motor Vehicles pursuant to this  
6 chapter, the person registering such vehicle shall pay to the  
7 commissioner a fee of fifteen dollars for registration for a triennial  
8 period or ten dollars for registration for a biennial period for the  
9 following registration types: Passenger, motorcycle, motor home,  
10 combination or antique; [. Any] except that (1) any person who is sixty-  
11 five years or older and who obtains a one-year registration renewal  
12 under section 14-49 for such registration type shall pay five dollars for  
13 the annual registration period, and (2) any person who is a veteran, as  
14 defined in section 27-103, and who presents documentation, satisfactory

15 to the commissioner or the commissioner's authorized representative,  
 16 indicating such person's status as a veteran shall be exempt from  
 17 payment of the fee. The provisions of this subsection shall not apply to  
 18 any motor vehicle that is not self-propelled or that is exempted from  
 19 payment of a registration fee. This fee shall be identified as the "Passport  
 20 to the Parks Fee" on any registration form provided by the  
 21 commissioner. Payments collected pursuant to the provisions of this  
 22 subsection shall be deposited in the Passport to the Parks account  
 23 established pursuant to section 23-15h. The fee required by this  
 24 subsection is in addition to any other fees prescribed by any other  
 25 provision of this title for the registration of a motor vehicle. No part of  
 26 the "Passport to the Parks Fee" shall be subject to a refund under  
 27 subsection (z) of section 14-49.

This act shall take effect as follows and shall amend the following sections:		
Section 1	July 1, 2023	14-49b(b)

VA Joint Favorable

*The following Fiscal Impact Statement and Bill Analysis are prepared for the benefit of the members of the General Assembly, solely for purposes of information, summarization and explanation and do not represent the intent of the General Assembly or either chamber thereof for any purpose. In general, fiscal impacts are based upon a variety of informational sources, including the analyst's professional knowledge. Whenever applicable, agency data is consulted as part of the analysis, however final products do not necessarily reflect an assessment from any specific department.*

**OFA Fiscal Note**

**State Impact:**

<b>Agency Affected</b>	<b>Fund-Effect</b>	<b>FY 24 \$</b>	<b>FY 25 \$</b>
Department of Energy and Environmental Protection	Passport to Parks - Revenue Loss	700,000- 1,400,000	700,000- 1,400,000

**Municipal Impact:** None

**Explanation**

The bill exempts veterans from paying the motor vehicle registration fee associated with the Passport to Parks program, which is expected to result in an estimated revenue loss to the program's account of \$700,000 to \$1.4 million annually beginning in FY 24. The bill's revenue loss is dependent on the number of veterans and the average number of motor vehicles registered by a veteran.

There are an estimated 140,687 veterans in the state; however, it is not known how many have registered a motor vehicle. Assuming each veteran has one registered motor vehicle on average and shows documentation of veteran status at registration, the revenue loss under the bill would be \$703,435 annually, while if every veteran registers two cars in their name on average, the annualized revenue loss would be \$1,406,870. The magnitude of the revenue loss associated with exempting veterans from the annual \$5 Passport to Parks registration fee could vary widely if the average number of registered vehicles for a veteran is greater or less than anticipated.

The Passport to Parks account funds: (1) the operation and maintenance of state parks and campgrounds by the Department of

Energy and Environmental Protection (DEEP); and (2) expenses of the Council on Environmental Quality (CEQ). The account's annual revenue averaged \$23.7 million over the most recent three fiscal years, while collections associated with motor vehicle registrations averaged \$19.4 million during the same period.

### ***The Out Years***

The annualized ongoing fiscal impact identified above would continue into the future subject to the number of veterans who are exempt from remitting vehicle registration fees to the Passport to Parks program and the average number of vehicles registered per veteran.

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**OLR Bill Analysis****HB 5205*****AN ACT CONCERNING VETERANS AND THE PASSPORT TO THE PARKS MOTOR VEHICLE REGISTRATION FEE.*****SUMMARY**

This bill exempts veterans from paying the passport to the parks fee collected on new and renewal motor vehicle registrations for passenger, motorcycle, motor home, combination, and antique motor vehicles. It requires anyone seeking an exemption to present verifying documentation to the Department of Motor Vehicles commissioner or his authorized representative.

By law, the “passport to the parks fee” is (1) \$15 for a three-year registration, (2) \$10 for a two-year registration, or (3) \$5 for anyone 65 or older who renews their registration each year (CGS § 14-49).

**BACKGROUND**

By law and under the bill, a veteran is anyone honorably discharged or released under honorable conditions from the United States Army, Navy, Marine Corps, Coast Guard, Air Force, or any reserve component, including the Connecticut National Guard performing certain duties (e.g., certain Homeland Security missions) (CGS § 27-103(a)). It also includes anyone released with an other than honorable discharge based on a qualifying condition from active service in the armed forces. A “qualifying condition” is a diagnosis of post-traumatic stress disorder or traumatic brain injury, a disclosed military sexual trauma, or a determination by the Eligibility Qualifying Review Board that sexual orientation, gender identity, or gender expression was more likely than not the primary reason for the other than honorable discharge (CGS § 27-103).

EFFECTIVE DATE: July 1, 2023

**COMMITTEE ACTION**

Veterans' and Military Affairs Committee

Joint Favorable

Yea 19 Nay 0 (02/16/2023)