

Veterans' and Military Affairs Committee

JOINT FAVORABLE REPORT

Bill No.: HB-5404

AN ACT CONCERNING MILITARY TRAINING AND EXPERIENCE AND THE

Title: DRIVER'S LICENSE ENDORSEMENT TO OPERATE FIRE APPARATUS.

Vote Date: 3/14/2024

Vote Action: Joint Favorable Substitute

PH Date: 3/7/2024

File No.: 176

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SPONSORS OF BILL:

Veterans' and Military Affairs Committee

REASONS FOR BILL:

To provide that, for any veteran or member of the armed forces who has military fire department training and experience related to operation of fire apparatus, the requirement for a "Q" driver's license endorsement shall be waived on submission of certain evidence that such veteran or member possesses the skills necessary for operation of fire apparatus.

PROPOSED SUBSTITUTE LANGUAGE

Revise section 2B to streamline the ability of veterans to apply for Q endorsements.

RESPONSE FROM ADMINISTRATION/AGENCY:

No agency or administration provided testimony on this bill.

NATURE AND SOURCES OF SUPPORT:

Brian Lanoue, State Representative, 45th District, Connecticut General Assembly

Provided testimony in support of this bill. Lanoue states that Connecticut imposes unnecessary hurdles on active military and veterans serving as firefighters by requiring them to acquire a special license endorsement to drive fire apparatuses, despite equivalent qualification gained through military services. This bill supports firefighters and their recruitment efforts by allowing qualified veterans to bypass the typical licensing requirements. Lanoue also urges the adoption of substitute language which creates similar exemptions for

members of the armed forces and veterans seeking to obtain commercial motor vehicle licenses.

William Leuck, Veteran; National Guard Soldier; Volunteer Firefighter/EMT

Provided testimony in support of and offering comment on the bill. Leuck raises the concern that the bill in its present form will only impact a small number of residents, and fail to address a larger population of service members who operate civilian commercial motor vehicles. He requests the bill add language to accept the Application for Military Skills Test Waiver to meet all requirements to grant a Q endorsement, and that the state develop and existing form to accompany the skills test waiver to request the Q endorsement through the DMV, as well as language providing a mechanism for a CDL be reduced to a Q endorsement at the request of the CDL holder. All of this would serve the purpose of removing the requirement of a service member to take a knowledge test to attain a CDL/Q endorsement, which can be difficult to fit into their schedule due to Reserve Components already requiring at least 1 weekend per month as part of their service.

NATURE AND SOURCES OF OPPOSITION:

No sources of Opposition

Reported by: Garrett Smith

Date: March 28, 2024