



House of Representatives

General Assembly

File No. 259

January Session, 2025

House Bill No. 6728

House of Representatives, March 26, 2025

The Committee on Veterans' and Military Affairs reported through REP. FOSTER of the 57th Dist., Chairperson of the Committee on the part of the House, that the bill ought to pass.

AN ACT CONCERNING FREE RIDERSHIP FOR VETERANS ON MODES OF PUBLIC TRANSPORTATION ON VETERANS' DAY.

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

1 Section 1. (NEW) (*Effective July 1, 2025*) (a) Annually on the eleventh
2 day of November, any person who is a veteran, as defined in section 27-
3 103 of the general statutes, shall be exempt from payment of the lawful
4 charge for state-owned or state-controlled bus public transportation
5 service, provided such person presents to the fare inspector, as defined
6 in section 13b-2 of the general statutes, or the driver of such bus, as
7 applicable, a motor vehicle operator's license or identity card indicating
8 such person's status as a veteran, as provided in subsection (e) of section
9 14-36h of the general statutes.

10 (b) Not later than January 1, 2026, the Commissioner of
11 Transportation shall (1) study the feasibility of annually exempting
12 veterans, by January 1, 2030, from payment of any charge, fee or fare
13 associated with riding all modes of public transportation in this state on
14 the eleventh day of November, and (2) if feasible, develop a plan to

15 implement such an exemption. Not later than February 1, 2026, the
16 commissioner shall submit, in accordance with the provisions of section
17 11-4a of the general statutes, a report detailing the results of such study
18 and recommendations for legislation to carry out such plan to the joint
19 standing committees of the General Assembly having cognizance of
20 matters relating to transportation and veterans' affairs.

This act shall take effect as follows and shall amend the following sections:		
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Section 1	<i>July 1, 2025</i>	New section
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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:

Agency Affected	Fund-Effect	FY 26 \$	FY 27 \$
Transportation, Dept.	TF - Cost	Minimal	Minimal

Note: TF=Transportation Fund

Municipal Impact: None

Explanation

The bill results in minimal annual cost to the Special Transportation Fund by exempting veterans from bus fare on Veterans Day, provided the veteran presents a driver's license or ID card showing his or her veteran status.

There are an estimated 152,000 veterans in Connecticut; however, there are fewer than 15,000 veterans who have a license/ID card indicating they are a veteran, which is required for receiving fare-free bus service under the bill. While the number and frequency of veterans who currently ride the bus is unknown, the cost for a single day each year in foregone revenue for this population is expected to be minimal.

The bill also requires the Department of Transportation to study and report on the feasibility of exempting veterans from fees on all modes of public transportation on Veterans Day, as described in the bill. Undertaking this study is within the department's expertise and is not expected to result in a fiscal impact.

The Out Years

The annualized ongoing fiscal impact identified above would continue into the future subject to the number of veterans riding the bus.

OLR Bill Analysis**HB 6728*****AN ACT CONCERNING FREE RIDERSHIP FOR VETERANS ON MODES OF PUBLIC TRANSPORTATION ON VETERANS' DAY.*****SUMMARY**

This bill exempts veterans (see BACKGROUND) from paying to ride state-owned or -controlled public bus transportation services on Veterans' Day (i.e. November 11). To receive the benefit, the veteran must present the bus driver or fare inspector, as applicable, a driver's license or identity card that shows his or her veteran status.

Existing law allows veterans to ask the Department of Veterans Affairs (DVA) to have their status as a veteran included on their driver's license or identity card. DVA must verify the status within 30 days after receiving the request and notify the Department of Motor Vehicles (DMV) about it. The status must then be included on each original, renewal, or duplicate driver's license or identity card DMV issues to the veteran (CGS § 14-36h(e)).

The bill also requires the transportation commissioner, by January 1, 2026, to (1) study the feasibility of annually exempting veterans from paying fares on Veterans' Day on all public transportation in the state by January 1, 2030, and (2) if feasible, develop an implementation plan to do it. By February 1, 2026, he must submit a report to the Transportation and Veterans' and Military Affairs committees with the study's results and recommendations for legislation to implement the plan.

EFFECTIVE DATE: July 1, 2025

BACKGROUND***Qualifying Veterans***

A “veteran” is anyone honorably discharged or released under honorable conditions, or released with an other than honorable discharge based on a qualifying condition, from active service in the armed forces (i.e. the U.S. Army, Navy, Marine Corps, Coast Guard, Space Force, Air Force, and any of their reserve components, including the Connecticut National Guard when under federal service) (CGS § 27-103).

COMMITTEE ACTION

Veterans’ and Military Affairs Committee

Joint Favorable

Yea 20 Nay 0 (03/11/2025)