

# Veterans' and Military Affairs Committee

## JOINT FAVORABLE REPORT

**Bill No.:** HB-6722

AN ACT CONCERNING REIMBURSEMENT OF CERTAIN FEES FOR  
VETERANS OR SPONSORS OF VETERANS IN APPRENTICESHIP

**Title:** PROGRAMS.

**Vote Date:** 3/11/2025

**Vote Action:** JOINT FAVORABLE Substitute Change of Reference to Appropriations

**PH Date:** 2/13/2025

**File No.:**

***Disclaimer:** The following JOINT FAVORABLE Report is prepared for the benefit of the members of the General Assembly, solely for purposes of information, summarization and explanation and does not represent the intent of the General Assembly or either chamber thereof for any purpose.*

### SPONSORS OF BILL:

Rep. Mary Welander, 114<sup>th</sup> Dist.

### REASONS FOR BILL:

This bill would establish a \$100,000 grant program to reimburse veterans and their sponsors in apprenticeship programs for licensure or certification fees related to the Department of Consumer Protection and Department of Labor, and for up to \$1,000 of technical education tuition. In a time when workforce development is a salient issue and veterans struggle to find jobs after their service ends, this bill would address both by making it easier for veterans to gain the appropriate licensing needed for many different jobs.

As the bill was initially written, any veteran - or their sponsor - involved in an applicable program could apply for the grant regardless of when they went through the program. The substitute language amends the bill to only apply to veterans who pay the fee after it is enacted.

### RESPONSE FROM ADMINISTRATION/AGENCY:

**Department of Consumer Protection, Commissioner, Bryan Cafferelli:** The Department of Consumer Protection expressed their concerns surrounding the bill, noting that while they appreciate the bill and its intent, the Department would very quickly need additional resources to support the grant program. The bill would require DCP to create a program for administering grants from scratch immediately upon passage. Given the number of professions that fall under DCP and the Department of Labor for certification, licensure, and apprenticeship programs, the Department would likely receive a lot of applicants upon passage.

## **NATURE AND SOURCES OF SUPPORT:**

### **Paul Amarone, Public Policy Associate, Connecticut Business and Industry Association:**

Mr. Amarone expressed his support for the bill and explained how it would be beneficial to the Connecticut job market. The multi-pronged approach of supporting both veterans looking for employment and employers investing resources into training these veterans will help address the dwindling job market.

**Emily Trudeau, Chair Connecticut Bar Association:** Ms. Trudeau expressed her enthusiastic support for this bill, explaining the challenges veterans face in finding employment that matches their qualifications. She pointed out that many veterans are underemployed or overqualified for the jobs they hold, yet because of the lack of civilian certification this underemployment is hard to overcome. Any measure that will help veterans get higher-quality jobs would go a long way both in helping veteran integration into civilian life and assuaging the mental health problems in the veteran community.

**Additional Testimony:** Eleven other individuals expressed their support for any measures that would help veterans. Testifiers included:

- **Robert Caffrey**
- **Nancy Comeau**
- **Randy Cyr**
- **Kevin Kauffman**
- **Hannah Linnell**
- **Thomas Mead**
- **Peter Plona**
- **William Sacchi**
- **Robert Titus**
- **Robert Wnek**
- **Kieran Edmondson**

## **NATURE AND SOURCES OF OPPOSITION:**

None expressed.

**Reported by: Sam Sims**

**Date: 3/12/2025**