

# Veterans' and Military Affairs Committee

## JOINT FAVORABLE REPORT

**Bill No.:** SB-1091

AN ACT CONCERNING THE BASIC PROPERTY TAX EXEMPTION FOR

**Title:** VETERANS AND CERTAIN OTHER MILITARY-RELATED INDIVIDUALS.

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

**Vote Action:** Joint Favorable Substitute

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

**File No.:**

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### SPONSORS OF BILL:

Sen. Catherine Osten, 19<sup>th</sup> Dist.

Rep. Anthony Nolan, 39<sup>th</sup> Dist.

### REASONS FOR BILL:

This bill seeks to increase the base property tax exemption available to veterans and certain members of the armed forces from \$1,000 to \$20,000, and to limit this exemption to property valued less than \$750,000. Currently many veterans are experiencing financial hardship, and a lot of those veterans are either homeless or on the brink of it. By expanding the existing property tax relief and limiting eligibility to veterans whose property is below a certain value, it provides housing assistance to needy veterans.

Given the potentially large fiscal note that could accompany an increase in the veterans' base property tax exemption, the substitute language of this bill changes it into a study on the feasibility of increasing the veterans' property tax exemption.

### RESPONSE FROM ADMINISTRATION/AGENCY:

None expressed.

### NATURE AND SOURCES OF SUPPORT:

**Allison Weir, Executive Director, CT Veterans' Legal Center:** As a veteran, Ms. Weir expressed her support for and appreciation of this bill. She noted that the existing exemption of \$1,000 is negligible in a state like Connecticut, and that the inclusion of the property value

cap it is important to avoid creating a windfall for veterans who are not in need of financial assistance.

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

- **Nancy Comeau**
- **Randy Cyr**
- **Kieran Edmondson**
- **Hannah Linnell**
- **Pamela Cranford**
- **Robert Caffrey**
- **Jon Coss**
- **Kieran Edmondson**
- **Kevin Kauffman**
- **Thomas Mead**
- **Michael Morneault**
- **Peter Plona**
- **Kristen Rzasa**
- **William Sacchi**
- **Robert Titus**
- **Robert Wnek**

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

**Randy Collins, Associate Director of Policy, Connecticut Conference of Municipalities:**

Mr. Collins expressed his opposition to this bill and his regard that this is just another in a long line of unfunded mandates on Connecticut's towns and municipalities. He noted that certain small towns have been hit especially hard by the erosion of their property tax base from state mandates.

**Douglas Haynes:** Mr. Haynes expressed his opposition to another bill in the committee, SB1276.

#### **GENERAL COMMENTS:**

**Stuart Topliff, Assessor, Town of Rocky Hill:** Mr. Topliff laid out his concerns with this bill and how it changes the base veterans' property tax exemption. He notes that while he believes the exemption should be amended, solely changing CGS Sec. 12-81 (19) will result in a minimum exemption of \$30,000 and a maximum exemption of \$360,000. He requested that the committee table this bill to further look at the language.

**Allan DeFilippo:** Mr. DeFilippo voiced his concern that the \$750,000 cap on eligible properties implies that certain veterans are less deserving of an exemption than others.

**Vincent Mase:** Mr. Mase expressed concerns about another bill in the Veterans' and Military Affairs Committee, SB1276.

**Reported by: Sam Sims**

**Date: 3/20/2025**

