

# Veterans' and Military Affairs Committee

## JOINT FAVORABLE REPORT

**Bill No.:** SB-1150

AN ACT PROVIDING FOR NO-COST DRIVER'S LICENSE AND IDENTITY

**Title:** CARD RENEWALS FOR VETERANS.

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

**Vote Action:** Joint Favorable

**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:

Sen. Christine Cohen, 12<sup>th</sup> Dist.  
Sen. Catherine Osten, 19<sup>th</sup> Dist.  
Sen. Paul Cicarella, 34<sup>th</sup> Dist.  
Rep. Vincent Candelora, 86<sup>th</sup> Dist.  
Rep. Joseph Zullo, 99<sup>th</sup> Dist.

### REASONS FOR BILL:

Currently, the Department of Motor Vehicles offers free driver's license and identity card renewals at annual Stand Down events, run by the Department of Veterans' Affairs. This service has been helpful to veterans in retaining their essential licensure, but the once-a-year nature of Stand Down events limits access to this service. This bill seeks to address this gap in the service by offering veterans free driver's license and ID card renewals year-round online or at any DMV location.

### RESPONSE FROM ADMINISTRATION/AGENCY:

None expressed.

### NATURE AND SOURCES OF SUPPORT:

**State Legislators, Connecticut General Assembly:** Four legislators with the Connecticut General Assembly expressed their support for this bill, thanking the Department of Motor Vehicles for the expanded services that they provide at Stand Down events. They noted the limitations around only offering free renewal services once a year and only at in-person events, and pointed out that year-round free renewals that are available online would expand access to this service. They also mentioned that while there will likely be a fiscal note

associated with this measure, veterans have contributed enough to this country to make the cost worth it. Testimony was provided by:

- **Senator Christine Cohen**
- **Senator Paul Cicarella**
- **Representative Vincent Candelora**
- **Representative Joseph Zullo**

**Sherri Marquis, Municipal Veterans Representative, Somers Department of Veterans**

**Affairs**: As a veterans' service officer and a municipal veterans' representative, Ms. Marquis expressed her strong support for this bill. She explained that the fee to renew a license can be a financial burden on many veterans with fixed incomes or disabilities, and many disabled and elderly veterans cannot easily make it to a Stand Down event for a free renewal.

**Francis McCarthy, American Legion Post 89**: Mr. McCarthy expressed his support for this bill and his concern that presently, the state only offers a six-hour window every year in which veterans can get a free ID card or driver's license renewal. He also noted that the inevitable cost of this would be spread out over the course of six to eight years, as veterans would not all be renewing their licenses at the same time.

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

- **Donna Bacchiocchi**
- **William Boylan**
- **Robert Caffrey**
- **Daniel Caisse**
- **Nancy Comeau**
- **Randy Cyr**
- **Kieran Edmondson**
- **Kevin Kauffman**
- **Hannah Linnell**
- **Thomas Mead**
- **Michael Morneault**
- **Peter Plona**
- **William Sacchi**
- **Robert Titus**
- **Robert Wnek**
- **Jamila Viandier**

**NATURE AND SOURCES OF OPPOSITION:**

**Cassandra Massano**: Ms. Massano expressed her opposition to this bill, claiming that by only providing free renewals to veterans with a special veterans' ID card or driver's license this bill essentially creates two classes of veterans: those with specialty licenses and those without. She went on to explain that if a veteran wishes to put the veteran designation onto their license or ID card prior to the renewal of that card, they would have to pay a \$30 fee.

**Reported by: Sam Sims**

**Date: 3/20/2025**

