
OLR Bill Analysis

HB 6440

AN ACT CONCERNING THE ORGANIZED MILITIA AND THE GOVERNOR'S GUARDS.

SUMMARY

The Governor's Guard currently consists of four units: the 1st and 2nd Company Governor's Foot Guard and the 1st and 2nd Company Governor's Horse Guard. Current law deems the guard as part of the organized militia under the Connecticut Military Department, with the immunities and privileges provided by law, and the governor may order the guard to state military duty.

This bill removes the guard as part of the organized militia and instead allows the units to organize as a private military force (§§ 1 & 3). It makes several related changes to their organization, such as removing the majors commandant of the four companies, and their immediate predecessors, as ex-officio members of the governor's military staff (§ 4).

The bill also reorganizes accounts related to the guard. Specifically, the bill redirects funds generated from the lease of facilities used by the (former) Governor's Horse Guards to the military facilities account (§ 6). It also requires transferring the balance of the Governor's Guards and Governor's Guards horse accounts to other accounts under the military department by June 30, 2025 (§§ 7 & 8).

Under the bill's provisions, the governor may still reactivate any private military force historically related to the Governor's Guard for parades, celebrations, and other ceremonies (but the members may not be forced to participate) (§ 2). It also authorizes the adjutant general to allow the use or lease of military facilities to any such private military forces (§ 6).

The bill also repeals statutes governing and regulating the

Governor's Guard (§ 9).

Relatedly, the bill specifies that the adjutant general may determine what he deems necessary to supply members of the organized militia to complete its assigned missions. Current law instead requires the adjutant general to issue the supplies requested by each company's commanding officer. As under existing law, this determination is subject to the governor's approval and must be paid by the comptroller (§ 5).

The bill also makes technical changes.

EFFECTIVE DATE: July 1, 2025, except that provisions on the transfer of the Governor's Guards financial accounts are effective upon passage.

§§ 1-3 — REORGANIZATION

The bill repeals the laws establishing the Governor's Guard and removes the guard from the state militia. Instead, it allows the guard to organize as a private military force to carry on the former companies' history, tradition, and honors. Under existing law, a private military force is, with some exceptions, a group of five or more people organized or associated together for the purpose of drilling or maneuvering with firearms or other dangerous weapons, or with imitations, copies, or replicas, or for the purpose of giving or acquiring military training or experience.

Under existing law, private military forces must file a sworn statement with the secretary of the state containing a copy of the force's constitution, bylaws, organizational rules or regulations, and a membership roster. They must also annually file by August 1 any changes to this statement.

The bill authorizes the governor to reactivate this private force for participation in any parade, celebration, or other ceremony. However, the bill prohibits spending state funds to reactivate these units and no member may be involuntarily activated.

§ 6 — USE OR LEASE OF MILITARY FACILITIES

Under current law, the adjutant general may only allow the lease or use of military facilities to certain organizations or individuals authorized in law (with one exception for Governor Horse Guard facilities (see below)). The bill extends this authorization to any private military force that is historically related to the former four companies of the Governor's Guards.

The bill also specifies that the adjutant general may allow the use of any military facility at no cost to this force. Youth military organizations already have this opportunity under existing law.

§§ 6-8 — REALLOCATION OF FINANCES

Under current law, the adjutant general may lease military facilities associated with the Governor's Horse Guard in certain towns to any person, if the lease terms do not conflict with the facility's military purposes. Lease proceeds must be deposited in the Governor's Guard horse account (a separate, nonlapsing account within the General Fund). This account includes donations for the specific purpose of offsetting the costs of maintaining Governor's Guards' horses.

The bill continues to allow these facilities to be leased in this way, but eliminates this account. Instead, it requires that the lease proceeds be deposited in the military facilities account, which is used by the military department for the maintenance and renovation of military facilities. The bill also requires that the balance of the Governor's Guard horse account be transferred to this military facilities account (§§ 6 & 8).

Separately, the bill eliminates the Governor's Guard account for the Foot Guard companies. It requires the balance of this account to be transferred to the Military Department's state morale, welfare and recreation account (§ 7).

Both balance transfers must occur by June 30, 2025.

§ 9 — REPEALS OF RELATED LAW

In addition to the provisions mentioned above, the bill repeals other provisions related to the Governor's Guard, including on

1. procedures for dismissing Governor's Guard members (CGS § 27-58); and
2. the requirement that the adjutant general provide armories, paid for by the comptroller, to each company, if the governor approves (CGS § 27-64).

COMMITTEE ACTION

Veterans' and Military Affairs Committee

Joint Favorable

Yea 10 Nay 9 (03/11/2025)