

Veterans' and Military Affairs Committee

JOINT FAVORABLE REPORT

Bill No: HB-5295 / [Bill Status](#) / [Public Hearing Testimony](#)

AN ACT NAMING THE CONNECTICUT NATIONAL GUARD READINESS

Title: CENTER IN THE TOWN OF PUTNAM.

Vote Date: 3/10/2026

Vote Action: Joint Favorable

PH Date: 2/24/2026

File No.:

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SPONSORS OF BILL:

Rep. Patrick Boyd, 50th Dist.

Rep. Kurt Vail, 52nd Dist.

Rep. Chris Stewart, 51st Dist.

Rep. Tom Delnicki, 14th Dist.

REASONS FOR BILL:

This bill looks to rename the Connecticut National Guard Readiness Center in Putnam to the "Governor John Dempsey Connecticut National Guard Readiness Center". In doing so, it seeks to honor the dedication of former Governor John Dempsey, a resident and former State Representative of Putnam, to the town and to northeastern Connecticut.

RESPONSE FROM ADMINISTRATION/AGENCY:

None expressed.

NATURE AND SOURCES OF SUPPORT:

Patrick Boyd, State Representative, Connecticut General Assembly: Rep. Boyd expressed his strong support for this bill, noting his appreciation for National Guard facilities. He pointed out that the newly constructed facility was built where the John N. Dempsey Regional Center, a field office for the Department of Developmental Services, used to stand. He went on to explain the history of Governor John Dempsey's service to the "Quiet Corner" and accomplishments as Governor, and he highlighted the impact that naming the National Guard Readiness Center would have on his legacy.

Norman Seney Jr., Mayor, Town of Putnam: Mr. Seney expressed his support for this bill, noting Governor John Dempsey's roots in Putnam and leadership during the Great Flood of

1955. He explained Governor Dempsey's rise through the ranks from state Representative to Governor, and he pointed out that the site where the National Guard Readiness Center used to be the John N. Dempsey Regional Center for the department of Developmental services.

Mike Bogdanski, Selectman, Town of Putnam: Mr. Bogdanski expressed his support for this bill and explained some of the history behind Governor John Dempsey's service as Mayor of Putnam and as Governor of Connecticut. He noted Dempsey's quick, decisive leadership during the 1955 floods in Putnam and commended his localized character and integrity. He urged the committee to pass this bill as a way to honor Governor John Dempsey's commitment to Putnam and to Connecticut.

J. Scott Pempek, Deputy Mayor, Town of Putnam: Mr. Pempek expressed his support for this bill, stating that in Putnam Governor John Dempsey is seen as a local kid who championed Putnam's values in the Governor's office. He noted the National Guard Readiness Center's importance to the community and asserted that naming the center after Dempsey would be a meaningful way to honor the former Governor's dedication to the town.

Steven Rioux, Superintendent, Putnam Public Schools: Mr. Rioux expressed his support for this bill and detailed how, as an Irish immigrant who came to Putnam as a child, Governor John Dempsey's history and character was rooted in the town. He laid out the timeline of Dempsey's public service as a City Councilor, Mayor, State Representative, Lieutenant Governor, and Governor, and he asserted the impact that naming the National Guard Readiness Center in Putnam would have on his legacy and on the town of Putnam.

Shawn Johnston, Former State Representative, Connecticut General Assembly: Mr. Johnston expressed his support for this bill and explained the history of John Dempsey's dedication to public service. He noted Dempsey's humble origins and dedication to civil service, both for Putnam and for the State of Connecticut, and he urged the committee to pass this bill in order to appropriately honor the former Governor.

Donald St Onge, Former Mayor, Town of Putnam: Mr. St Onge expressed his support for this bill and asserted how critical Putnam was to Governor John Dempsey's history. He noted Dempsey's dedication to public service over the years and he stressed the community value that comes with naming facilities after prominent community members.

Assorted Testimony: Multiple individuals expressed their support for this bill, pointing to Governor John Dempsey's history in Putnam and dedication to public service as reasons to commemorate him through the naming of the National Guard Readiness Center in the town. Testimony was provided by:

- **Frances Bousquet**
- **David Gaudreau**
- **Monique Mailoux**
- **Jill Zangerl**

NATURE AND SOURCES OF OPPOSITION:

None expressed.

Reported by: Sam Sims

Date: 3/20/26

