
OLR Bill Analysis

HB 6314

AN ACT PROVIDING FOR DISCOUNTED HUNTING, TRAPPING AND FISHING LICENSES FOR VETERANS AND ACTIVE DUTY MEMBERS OF THE ARMED FORCES.

This bill reduces the fees charged to veterans and active duty armed forces members for certain sporting licenses to 50% of a Connecticut resident's cost, rounded to the next highest dollar. It applies to the fees charged to any veteran or armed forces member for (1) any firearms or archery hunting, trapping, or sport fishing license or (2) a license permit, tag, or stamp for:

1. firearm, archery, turkey, deer, or small game hunting;
2. Connecticut migratory or resident game bird conservation; and
3. sport, salmon, or trout fishing.

The bill makes conforming changes by eliminating the current provisions allowing nonresident, active full-time armed forces members to purchase deer hunting permits at the resident rate. However, it leaves unchanged a provision allowing these nonresident members to purchase any sporting license at the resident rate (see COMMENT).

EFFECTIVE DATE: July 1, 2023

BACKGROUND

Definition of Veteran

By law, and under the bill, a veteran is anyone honorably discharged, released under honorable conditions, or released with an other than honorable discharge based on a "qualifying condition" from active service in the United States Army, Navy, Marine Corps, Coast Guard, Air Force, or any of their reserve components, including the Connecticut National Guard performing certain duties (e.g., responding to certain

national emergencies) (CGS § 27-103(a)). A “qualifying condition” is a (1) post-traumatic stress disorder or traumatic brain injury diagnosis by a licensed health care professional at a U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs facility, (2) military sexual trauma disclosed to such health care professional, or (3) determination by the Eligibility Qualifying Review Board that sexual orientation, gender identity, or gender expression was more likely than not the primary reason for the other than honorable discharge (CGS § 27-103).

COMMENT

Conflict Between Bill and Existing Fee Reduction for Nonresident Armed Forces Members

The bill reduces the fees charged to active duty armed forces members for certain hunting and fishing licenses to 50% of the resident rate, but does not make a conforming change to an existing law that allows nonresident active duty service members to purchase any sporting license at the resident rate (CGS § 26-34a). So, it is unclear which reduced rate applies for these members.

COMMITTEE ACTION

Veterans' and Military Affairs Committee

Joint Favorable

Yea 19 Nay 0 (02/16/2023)