

Legislative History for Connecticut Act

PA15-65

HB6833

House	1566-1576	10
Senate	2367-2369, 2491-2492	5
Commerce	236, 240-243	5
		20

Transcripts from the Joint Standing Committee Public
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**CONNECTICUT
GENERAL ASSEMBLY
HOUSE**

**PROCEEDINGS
2015**

**VOL.58
PART 5
1386 – 1739**

/ks
HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

69
May 6, 2015

roll. Will members please report to the Chamber immediately.

DEPUTY SPEAKER GENTILE:

Have all members voted? Have all members voted? Will members please check the board to determine if your vote is properly cast. If all the members have voted, the machine will be locked and the Clerk will take a tally.

Will the Clerk please announce the tally.

CLERK:

House Bill 6717

Total Number Voting 147

Necessary for Passage 74

Those voting Yea 147

Those voting Nay 0

Those absent and not voting 4

DEPUTY SPEAKER GENTILE:

The bill passes. [gavel] Will the Clerk please call Calendar 131.

CLERK:

House Calendar 131, Favorable Report of the Joint Standing Committee on Commerce. House Bill 6833, on page 6 of the Calendar, AN ACT CONCERNING

/ks
HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

70
May 6, 2015

THE QUALIFICATIONS AND DUTIES OF THE EXECUTIVE
DIRECTOR OF THE OFFICE OF MILITARY AFFAIRS.

DEPUTY SPEAKER GENTILE:

Representative Perone.

REP. PERONE (137th):

Madam Speaker. It's a pleasure to see you up there. How are you? Good afternoon. Madam Speaker. I move for acceptance of the Joint Committee's Favorable Report and passage of the bill.

DEPUTY SPEAKER GENTILE:

The question before the Chamber is on acceptance of the Joint Committee's Favorable Report and passage of the bill. Representative Perone.

REP. PERONE (137th):

Thank you very much, Madam Speaker. Essentially, the background behind this bill, is that the Office of Military Affairs was created to combat BRAC and base closings and to promote the defense industry in the state of Connecticut. Among its primary responsibilities, the office seeks to enhance the military industry, and Connecticut's presence in it. Right now, and how

/ks
HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

71
May 6, 2015

it's been, the Office of Military Affairs has been a one-person shop. Because of that, in order to help them do what they need to do, and because it's really considered an economic development office, the office is located within the DEZD. The reason for the bill, is that - even the only substantive change, is that we're requiring any applicant for this job in the future, to have attained the rank of a field-grade, or senior officer, within a branch of the armed forces. The purpose of the change is to ensure, that the executive director has an appropriate level of experience to establish close partnerships with other senior officers. And that's pretty much the gist. So, with that, I - I'm finished.

DEPUTY SPEAKER GENTILE:

Thank you, sir. Will you remark further?

Representative Camillo.

REP. CAMILLO (151st):

Thank you, thank you Madam Speaker. A few questions, through you, to the Chairman of Commerce.

DEPUTY SPEAKER GENTILE:

You may proceed, sir.

/ks
HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

72
May 6, 2015

REP. CAMILLO (151st):

This bill, just to clear up some confusion that we had originally when we heard this bill in Commerce, is the Office of Military Affairs, is that a separate entity within the ECD? Through you, Madam Speaker.

DEPUTY SPEAKER GENTILE:

Representative Perone.

REP. PERONE (137th):

It's its own office, yes. I mean, it's not - yes.

DEPUTY SPEAKER GENTILE:

Representative Camillo.

REP. CAMILLO (151st):

Thank you. We, again, had some questions about why this was before Commerce, and not the Office of Military Affairs, so - Committee. This is - this office - OMA, is more economic in nature than military in nature. Would that be a correct statement? Through you, Madam Speaker.

DEPUTY SPEAKER GENTILE:

Representative Perone.

REP. PERONE (137th):

/ks
HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

73
May 6, 2015

Yes it is, That's solely the purpose.

Through you, Madam Speaker.

DEPUTY SPEAKER GENTILE:

Representative Camillo.

REP. CAMILLO (151st):

Thank you. There were some questions we heard later about why this is being changed a little bit. From as it stands right now, I assume this is any officer can have this position. This would upgrade it, as Representative Perone said, to a senior officer. This, just for a point of clarification for our colleagues, this is so that the requisite experience and background, would come into play here, for this office, and help it function better. Through you, Madam Speaker.

DEPUTY SPEAKER GENTILE:

Representative Perone

REP. PERONE (137th):

Through you, Madam Speaker. Yes, that's correct. Essentially, you want to have almost a peer or appropriate level of background and experience to be able to not only deal with the federal entities when we're talking about BRAC

/ks
HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

74
May 6, 2015

closings, but also in talking to other defense industry people, or hiring consultants, or doing any of the other jobs within the DECD. Essentially it makes the office that much more effective, we feel.

DEPUTY SPEAKER GENTILE:

Representative Camillo.

REP. CAMILLO (151st):

Thank you, Madam Speaker. And I thank the good gentleman from Norwalk for his answers, and I urge passage of this bill. Thank you.

DEPUTY SPEAKER GENTILE:

Representative Hennessy.

REP. HENNESSY (127th):

Thank you, Madam Speaker. In regards to the Representative from Greenwich, I just wanted to stand up and concur that this is in fact, an office within DECD, that Bob Ross has been a bipartisan champion for our sub base over years, serving under two governors, Republican and Democrat alike. Under his leadership, the Office of Military Affairs has grown into a national model that the rest of the country is emulating, and this will ensure that, as we go forward, our military bases

/ks
HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

75
May 6, 2015

in Connecticut will be protected, when BRAC comes looking around to downsize. So, I urge support for the bill. Thank you.

DEPUTY SPEAKER GENTILE:

Representative Yaccarino.

REP. YACCARINO (87th):

Thank you, Madam Chair. It's good seeing you up there. A question to the proponent of the bill please. Through you.

DEPUTY SPEAKER GENTILE:

You may proceed, sir.

REP. YACCARINO (87th):

Thank you, Madam Speaker. The new Executive Director for DECD, the Military Affairs, will they be directly - be working with as liaisons with our Congressmen and -women in Washington for the sub-base, which I was stationed at a long time ago, and General Dynamics and any other bases in Connecticut? Thank you, Madam Speaker.

DEPUTY SPEAKER GENTILE:

Representative Perone.

REP. PERONE (137th):

With all due respect, it's hard to hear, I can't quite hear his questions.

/ks
HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

76
May 6, 2015

DEPUTY SPEAKER GENTILE:

Can you please take your conversations
outside? So we can hear?

REP. PERONE (137th):

He could just re-state -

DEPUTY SPEAKER GENTILE:

Representative Yaccarino, could you repeat the
question please?

REP. PERONE (137th):

Just the essence of the question, thank you.

REP. YACCARINO (87th):

The new Executive Director, who will work for
the Military Affairs, and the DECD, will they be
directly in contact with our congressmen and -women
in Washington to secure jobs at General Dynamics,
or the sub base, which I said I was stationed ay,
many, many years ago. Through you, Madam Speaker.

DEPUTY SPEAKER GENTILE:

Representative Perone.

REP. PERONE (137th):

Right, that's essential to the position.
Essentially, the effort is to build the - improve,
and also reinforce the defense industry in the
state of Connecticut, and really the only way to do

/ks
HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

77
May 6, 2015

that is by working with our congressional delegation as well as other manufacturing executives for the defense industry within the state. Through you, Madam Speaker.

DEPUTY SPEAKER GENTILE:

Representative Yaccarino.

REP. YACCARINO (87th):

Thank you for that answer. Besides the sub base and General Dynamics, will they be working with Sikorsky, or will it be just the sub base of Navy Affairs? Through you, Madam Speaker.

DEPUTY SPEAKER GENTILE:

Representative Perone.

REP. PERONE (137th):

Through you, Madam Speaker. While I don't specifics on who exactly they are going to work with, it has been the policy in the past to maintain these contacts and these relationships with a variety of aerospace and other defense firms in the state. Through you.

DEPUTY SPEAKER GENTILE:

Representative Yaccarino.

REP. YACCARINO (87th):

/ks
HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

78
May 6, 2015

Thank you that answer. I think this is a great bill, I think it's important for jobs, defense jobs or in the military are high-paying jobs and I support this initiative and I'd like to thank the good gentleman and in the good ranking member for their work on this in their Committee. Thank you, Madam Chair.

DEPUTY SPEAKER GENTILE:

Thank you. Will you remark further? Will you remark further on the bill? If not, will staff and guests please come to the well of the House. Will members please take your seats, and the machine will be opened.

[bell ringing]

CLERK:

The House of Representatives is voting by roll. The House of Representatives is voting by roll. Will members please report to the Chamber immediately.

DEPUTY SPEAKER GENTILE:

Have all members voted? Have all members voted? Will members please check the board to

/ks
HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

79
May 6, 2015

determine if your vote is properly cast. If all members have voted, the machine will be locked and the Clerk will take a tally.

Clerk, please announce the tally.

CLERK:

House Bill 6833

Total Number Voting 147

Necessary for Passage 74

Those voting Yea 143

Those voting Nay 4

Those absent and not voting 4

DEPUTY SPEAKER GENTILE:

The bill passes. [gavel] Will Clerk please call Calendar No. 134.

CLERK:

House Calendar 134, on page 51. Favorable Report of the Joint Standing Committee on Planning and Development. House Bill 6913, AN ACT CONCERNING LOCAL EMERGENCY PLANS OF OPERATION.

DEPUTY SPEAKER GENTILE:

Representative Dargan.

REP. DARGAN (115th):

**S - 686
CONNECTICUT
GENERAL ASSEMBLY
SENATE**

**PROCEEDINGS
2015**

**VOL. 58
PART 8
2311 – 2667**

/pt
SENATE

102
May 28, 2015

On Page No. 10, Calendar 463, House Bill No. 6833 AN ACT CONCERNING THE QUALIFICATIONS AND DUTIES OF THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR OF THE OFFICE OF MILIARY AFFAIRS, Favorable Report of the Committee on Commerce and that's it.

THE CHAIR:

Senator Hartley.

SENATOR HARTLEY:

Thank you, Madam President. I move acceptance of the Joint Committee's Favorable Report and passage of the bill in concurrence with the House.

THE CHAIR:

Motion's on acceptance and passage in concurrence. Will you remark?

SENATOR HARTLEY:

Yes, thank you, Madam President, so the bill before us is essentially a housekeeping bill cleaning up some obsolete functions of the Office of the Military Affairs.

Additionally, it does identify a change in the military rank required for the executive director of that office, and it specifically highlights now the current practices of this office, which are really the advocacy for service members and their families.

And initiating partnerships also on a local level with military commanders, and continuing the consultation with DECD in promoting financial agreements, and economic development with the Defense and Homeland Security sector. Thank you, Madam President.

THE CHAIR:

Thank you. Will you remark on the bill? Will you remark? Senator Frantz.

SENATOR FRANTZ:

/pt
SENATE

103
May 28, 2015

Yes, Madam President, thank you. The bill is technical in nature and I don't like to spend a lot of time on technical bills, and you don't either, and I'm sure you don't, Madam President.

But the implications in this bill are far reaching and important and worth spending a couple of seconds on, and that is with where we are in our defense industry's track record and what's happened, and what is most likely to happen over the next five to ten to twenty years.

It's important that agencies like this particular one do all the right things with respect to keeping that industry alive and expanding it. This has to do with southeastern Connecticut, Senator Formica's district and some of the other folks, Senator Maynard, who have a great big interest down there in seeing some of these different homeland security and defense firms continue to succeed and hopefully have a very, very bright future.

This bill does take an incremental step in providing for that, and so therefore I highly recommend that you support it. Thank you, Madam President.

THE CHAIR:

Thank you. Will you remark? Will you remark? Senator Formica. Senator Formica.

SENATOR FORMICA:

Thank you, Madam President, good afternoon. Almost evening.

THE CHAIR:

Good afternoon.

SENATOR FORMICA:

Thank you. I'd like to commend the bill coming forward and the Executive Director of Military Affairs for putting this together and for doing a wonderful job over the last five or seven years that he's been up there and defining this position further.

/pt
SENATE

104
May 28, 2015

I think this is a wonderful opportunity to maintain the wonderful presence we have, our great military, not only in southeastern Connecticut, but throughout our state. So I'm in support of this bill. Thank you, Madam President.

THE CHAIR:

Thank you. Will you remark further? Will you remark further? If not, Senator Hartley.

SENATOR HARTLEY:

Yes, thank you, Madam President. Without objection, if we might put this to the Consent List. Thank you, madam.

THE CHAIR:

Seeing no objection, so ordered, ma'am. Mr. Clerk.

CLERK:

On Page 5, Calendar 330, Senate Bill No. 73 AN ACT CONCERNING MEDICAL RECORDS, Favorable Report of the Committee on Public Health. There's an amendment.

THE CHAIR:

Senator Gerratana, good afternoon, ma'am.

SENATOR GERRATANA:

Good afternoon, Madam President. Madam President, I move acceptance of the Joint Committee's Favorable Report and passage of the bill.

THE CHAIR:

Motion is on acceptance and passage. Will you remark?

SENATOR GERRATANA:

Yes, madam, thank you very much. I do have a strike-all amendment, so I will please ask the Clerk to call

May 28, 2015

SENATE

THE CHAIR:

Thank you. Mr. Clerk, will you please call the bills on the Consent Calendar?

CLERK:

On Page 3, Calendar 189, Senate Bill No. 23. Page 5, Calendar 330, Senate Bill 73. Page 8, Calendar 435, House Bill 6839. Page 10, Calendar 463, House Bill 6833. Also on Page 10, Calendar 461, House Bill 6403.

On Page 11, Calendar 470, House Bill 7007. On Page 12, Calendar 474, House Bill 6925. On Page 14, Calendar 490, House Bill 6952, and on Page 16, Calendar 507, House Bill 6946.

On Page 18, Calendar 514, House Bill 6787 and Page 24, Calendar 548, House Bill 6942. On Page 27, Calendar 568, House Bill 6973 and Page 30, Calendar 581, House Bill 6695. On Page 34, Calendar 138, Senate Bill 957 and also on Page 34, Calendar 92, Senate Bill 6, I'm sorry, Senate Bill 853.

Page 37, Calendar 249, Senate Bill 99, Page 38, Calendar 324, Senate Bill 451, and on Page 40, Calendar 401, Senate Bill 949.

THE CHAIR:

All the bills are called. At this time, Mr. Clerk, I'd call for a roll call vote and the machine will be open on the Consent Calendar.

CLERK:

Immediate roll call has been ordered in the Senate on today's Consent Calendar. Immediate roll call has been ordered in the Senate.

[pause]

THE CHAIR:

If all members have voted, all members have voted, the machine will be closed. Mr. Clerk, will you please call the tally.

/pt
SENATE

227
May 28, 2015

CLERK:

On today's Consent Calendar

Total Number Voting	36
Necessary for Adoption	19
Those voting Yea	36
Those voting Nay	0
Absent/not voting	0

THE CHAIR:

The Consent Calendar is passed. [gavel] Senator Duff.

SENATOR DUFF:

Thank you, Madam President. Before we announce the time for tomorrow, I'll yield to any points of personal privilege or announcements.

THE CHAIR:

Are there any points of personal privilege or announcements? Senator Bye, are you standing for a reason? Senator Bye.

SENATOR BYE:

Thank you, Madam President, yes. I'm calling for purposes of an announcement.

THE CHAIR:

Please proceed, ma'am.

SENATOR BYE:

Tomorrow morning at 10 a.m., the Appropriations Committee will meet in Room 2C to consider bills. Thank you, Madam President. I should have said this morning.

THE CHAIR:

Yes, you're right. It is this morning, ma'am. Thank you very much.

**JOINT
STANDING
COMMITTEE
HEARINGS**

**COMMERCE
1 – 536**

**2015
INDEX**

I -- I take it that I should just proceed.

REP. PERONE: Yes, I'm sorry. Go right ahead, thank you.

COMMISSIONER CATHERINE H. SMITH: Okay, perfect.

Well, Senator Hartley, Representative Perone, Members of the Committee, it's a pleasure to be with you this morning and today I'm going to testify in favor of a number of the bills on your list.

HB 6829

HB 6830

SB 961

HB 6831

SB 960

I think you have in front of you -- if you do not -- our testimony that's divided by each of these bills, so let me quickly go through them and then I will take any questions that you might have.

HB 6832

HB 6833

First on the list is House Bill 6828 which is AN ACT ESTABLISHING A STATE FILM PERMITTING PROCESS. Briefly, what this proposes to do is to have DECD's Office of Film and Digital Media be kind of the-- the one point of contact for productions that are being managed in the state, and this could be a production that came from out of state or in state.

As you know, when films are being made they need to get permits on a variety of different levels and right now our process is that they must go to each and every one of the agencies responsible for those areas, and this concept here -- and it's been agreed to by all of the relevant agencies -- would be that DECD would manage that behind the scenes for the entity making it a simple, easy one stop process.

So I think this one is -- it's in -- in line with the notion that we've had in this Administration to try to streamline, make

requirements in the legislation on the books today that require us to report on the Department of Labor statistics and a number of other things which take up volumes of room, literally hundreds of pages but don't necessarily describe in -- in any detail at all what the real strategic plan is for the state.

So what we'd like to do is require the -- the -- the plan to be focused on actually what the strategic initiatives are, what the metrics are around that, and the progress that we're making on that and leave to other sources of information some of the basic background information that may be relevant, but not necessarily directly pertinent to the Strategic Plan.

So both of these things, again, are in the notion of let's make it easier for our constituents to understand what we're doing and see the results of our programs.

House Bill 6832 is AN ACT THAT REPEALS THE HIGH PERFORMANCE WORK ORGANIZATION PROGRAM AND THRESHOLD PROJECT PROVISIONS, and this one is again in the -- in the notion of simplifying and making things a bit easier. It's something that we think is -- is largely not necessary given our current underwriting criteria and the reporting that we do get from existing companies, so we think these -- this information that we're currently gathering is very appropriate and -- and we do not know -- we no longer need this Threshold Project provisions in the -- in the statutes.

SB6833

Test in -- on 6833, it's -- it has to do with the Office of Military Affairs which, as you know, is housed for administrative purposes within DECD. These are pretty minor changes, again just getting the bill up to date with

what the Office is actually doing and reflecting really kind of the high value areas that we currently have.

I think the most substantive change in here is to suggest that we change the level of the military experience that is required for the -- the -- the -- the person who would be hired into this role and I think based on the importance of this role, as particularly as the U.S. Department of Defense may again take up a "BRAC" type effort in the next -- some time in the next two to five years -- we think it's very important that somebody of the right level be in this position to be able to be our spokesperson in Washington and -- and elsewhere as we work on making sure that the defense dollars stay strong for the state.

And then finally but -- is tax -- sorry, Bill No. 960, this is a Senate Bill, which is eliminating unused tax credits.

We -- every year -- every three years we do a complete assessment of all the tax credits that we manage and that are actually managed in some cases through other departments, and these two credits that we're suggesting be eliminated as of today have had no takers whatsoever, so we would respectfully request that we eliminate them so we're not subject to reporting on something that doesn't have any takers.

We do believe that the number of the tax credits have been quite effective in their work and I urge you to take a look at our tax credit report which also came out, I believe, late last year and it goes through each and every one of these tax credits, some of which are earned, if you will, and some of which are entitlement based and it does provide some other recommendations over time that we might

want to consider for the tax credit programs.

So that summarizes the bills that I wanted to address today and I would be happy to take any of your questions.

REP. PERONE: Okay. Thank you very much. First of all, are there any questions? Okay. Representative.

REP. ALBERTS: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Thank you, Commissioner, for your testimony.

I had a question on Bill 6833 as drafted in line ten. I'll let you get to that.

COMMISSIONER CATHERINE H. SMITH: Do you have 6833? I don't have a copy of the bill with me. Perhaps you could read it to me.

REP. ALBERTS: Absolutely. It proposes the insertion of language, quote a field grade or senior in front of --

COMMISSIONER CATHERINE H. SMITH: Yes.

REP. ALBERTS: -- officer. So I just want to make sure I understand the intent. I understand what a field grade officer, that's someone who's attained the rank of 04 or major in the Air Force, Army or above.

When you make reference, or when it's contemplated senior, are you looking at someone who's greater than that in -- in terms of the level of experience because there's no senior classification in the military. There's different levels. There's company grade officers that are captain and below. There's field grade which are higher.

So I just want to make sure I'm very clear

because what you're -- I think what you're trying to do is be specific here --

COMMISSIONER CATHERINE H. SMITH: Yes.

REP. ALBERTS: -- but I want to make sure the language matches up.

COMMISSIONER CATHERINE H. SMITH: So this language was worked on by our current Office of Military Affairs person, Bob Ross, who came out of the military himself --

A VOICE: (Inaudible) get back.

COMMISSIONER CATHERINE H. SMITH: And I --

A VOICE: (Inaudible) get back to you.

COMMISSIONER CATHERINE H. SMITH: -- I think we're going to have to get back to you.

REP. ALBERTS: Thank you. Thank you, Commissioner, and I thank the gentleman because I just want to make sure that I -- that the intent is for someone of field grade level or higher --

COMMISSIONER CATHERINE H. SMITH: Yes, I think that's what it means.

REP. ALBERTS: -- greater than field grade level, and maybe we, Mr. Chair, we may need to parse this language a little bit more just to make sure we get that across but --

COMMISSIONER CATHERINE H. SMITH: Clearly that was the intent but we will double check and make sure.

REP. ALBERTS: Great. Thank you, Commissioner. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.