

Legislative History for Connecticut Act

PA 16-164

SB201

Senate	474-475, 509-510	4
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Veterans' Affairs	81, 126	2
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**CONNECTICUT
GENERAL ASSEMBLY
SENATE**

**PROCEEDINGS
2016**

**VOL. 59
PART 2
356 - 678**

je/mc
SENATE

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April 13, 2016

our good ranking member, Senator Witkos, mentioned, this will ensure that it's not every manufacturer giving the certification. This will be under the guidelines of the Department of Consumer Protection, and I would urge passage.

THE CHAIR:

Thank you, sir. Will you remark further on the bill? Will you remark further? Senator?

SENATOR LEONE (27TH):

If not, I would ask this be placed on the Consent Calendar.

THE CHAIR:

Seeing no objection, so ordered, sir. As amended.
Mr. Clerk.

THE CLERK:

On page 7, Calendar 128, Senate Bill Number 201, AN ACT CONCERNING THE POSTHUMOUS AWARDING OF THE CONNECTICUT WARTIME SERVICE MEDAL.

THE CHAIR:

Senator Flexer. Good afternoon, ma'am.

SENATOR FLEXER (29TH):

Good afternoon, Madam President. I move for acceptance of the Joint Committee's favorable report and passage of the bill.

THE CHAIR:

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The motion is on acceptance and passage. Will you remark, ma'am?

SENATOR FLEXER (29TH):

Thank you, Madam President. Madam President, the bill before us today allows the Department of Veterans Affairs or the Commissioner of Veterans Affairs to award the Connecticut Wartime Service Medal to veterans after they have passed away. It has been the practice of the department at the request of family members to award this medal, and this would codify existing practice at the department in our state's statutes regarding the Connecticut Wartime Service Medal. I hope that the Chamber can support this measure.

THE CHAIR:

Thank you. Will you remark further on the bill? Will you remark further on the bill? Senator Flexer.

SENATOR FLEXER (29TH):

If there is no objection, I'd like to place this item on the Consent Calendar.

THE CHAIR:

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

THE CLERK:

On page 8, Calendar 141, Substitute for Senate Bill Number 70, AN ACT CONCERNING TELEHEALTH PROVIDERS.

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page 6, Calendar 114, Senate Bill 191. On page 7, Calendar 128, Senate Bill Number 201. On page 8, Calendar 141, Senate Bill Number 70. On page 9, Calendar 163, Senate Bill Number 160. On page 10, Calendar 177, Senate Bill Number 213. On page 13, Calendar 231, Senate Bill 251. On page 15, Calendar 246, Senate Bill 88. Also on page 15, Calendar 248, Senate Bill 121. On page 37, Calendar 160, Senate Bill 311.

THE CHAIR:

Mr. Clerk, will you call for -- hold on. Okay. We're going to stand at ease for one second.

(Senate at Ease.)

Mr. Clerk, will you call for a roll call vote on the Consent Calendar. The machine is open.

THE CLERK:

Immediate roll call has been ordered in the Senate.
Immediate roll call on the first Consent Calendar for today.

THE CHAIR:

All members have voted? All members have voted?
The machine will be closed. Mr. Clerk, will you please call the tally.

THE CLERK:

On the first Consent Calendar for today,

Total Number Voting	36
Those voting Yea	36

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Those voting Nay	0
Absent and not voting	0

THE CHAIR:

The Consent Calendar passes. Senator Duff.

SENATOR DUFF (25TH):

Thank you, Madam President. If I could change a marking please. On Calendar page 14, Calendar 237, Senate Bill 298, if we could mark that passed retaining please.

THE CHAIR:

So ordered, sir.

SENATOR DUFF (25TH):

Thank you, Madam President, and if we could not return to our list, and Calendar page 38, Calendar 173, Senate Bill 152, as the next item.

THE CHAIR:

Mr. Clerk.

THE CLERK:

On page 38, Calendar 173, Substitute for Senate Bill Number 152, AN ACT CONCERNING THE DISCLOSURE OF HOUSING DISCRIMINATION AND FAIR HOUSING LAWS.

THE CHAIR:

Good afternoon, Senator Winfield.

**JOINT
STANDING
COMMITTEE
HEARINGS**

**VETERANS'
AFFAIRS**

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February 23, 2016

kbk/cw

VETERANS' AFFAIRS COMMITTEE

1:00 P.M.

TOM SAADI: Good afternoon, Senator Flexer, Representative Hennessy, ranking Member and esteemed Members of the Veterans' Affairs Committee, I am Tom Saadi, the Chief of Staff and General Counsel of the State Department of Veterans' Affairs. Unfortunately Commissioner Connelly could not be here as he is in Washington, D.C. today. I thank you for your work on behalf of Connecticut veterans, and for the opportunity to speak to you today.

SB197
SB208
HB5353

While the Commissioner supports several of the Committee's raised bills, my testimony will generally focus on those bills related to the Department's operations.

I'd first like to discuss the concepts raised in Bills 201 and 206, the expansion of the Connecticut wartime service medals to service members on active duty in Connecticut, and to veterans who died between November 1918 and December 1999.

It is a laudable and deserved expansion. I would echo the comments of General Russo that prior to final action, the Committee allow the Military Department and the Department of Veterans' Affairs to discuss this and to work with the Committee to assess the impact and the ability to be able to do this, should the bill pass with the -- within current resources, which we all know are limited.

With regard to raised Bill --

UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: (Indiscernible - away from microphone)

TOM SAADI: With regard to raised Bill 205; this



STATE OF CONNECTICUT

DEPARTMENT OF VETERANS' AFFAIRS
OFFICE OF THE COMMISSIONER
287 West Street
Rocky Hill, Connecticut 06067

(14)
SB197 SB208
HB5353

Department of Veterans' Affairs Testimony to the Committee on Veterans' Affairs February 23, 2016

Good afternoon, Senator Mae Flexer, Representative Jack Hennessey, ranking members, and esteemed members of the Veterans' Affairs Committee:

I am Thomas Saadi, Chief of Staff and General Counsel for the State Department of Veterans' Affairs and I am here on behalf of Commissioner Sean Connolly who is currently in Washington D.C. I thank you for your work on behalf of Connecticut Veterans and for the opportunity to address you today. While the Commissioner supports of several of the committee's raised bills my testimony will generally focus on bills related to the Department's operations.

I would first like to discuss the concepts raised in bills 201 and 206. The expansion of Connecticut Wartime Service Medals to service members on active duty and to Veterans who died between November 12, 1918 and December 31, 1999, is laudable and well deserved, however it will require an increase of Departmental resources to process applications and award potentially thousands of additional medals. Since 2005 the Department has proudly awarded more than 34,000 of such medals without additional staff or funding and increasing the number of medals awarded could impact limited resources and increase the time frame for application processing and awarding of medals.

Raised Bill 205 incorporates many of the recommendations of the Department's Connecticut Women Veterans' Program report. That said, elements of this legislation would require diversion of Department resources that currently provide direct services Connecticut Veterans, female and male. The Department would welcome the opportunity to work with the committee to find ways to accomplish many of these laudable goals without requiring reallocation or additional resources. Additionally, several of the items outlined in the bill are already underway at the Department. I will briefly discuss these items below.

The Department is exploring the development of a women veterans services training module as set forth in section 1 of the bill. The Department has been reviewing and updating our VSO training, which covers a broad range of federal, state and local benefits, services and assistance for all Veterans - female and male. We have been communicating directly with the Federal VA CT Healthcare System Women Veterans Program Manager in this process. Also, the Department has scheduled two training sessions in 2016 for all municipal veterans' service contact persons. We are open to expanding that training to include representatives of the state public institutions of higher education as contemplated in the bill.