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State of Connecticut

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HOUSING COMMITTEE
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PUBLIC SAFETY COMMITTEE

Testimony
Senator Paul Cicarella
Veterans' Affairs Committee
In support of SB 414 and SB 614
February 17, 2021

Co-Chairs Boyd and Cabrera; Vice Chairs Maroney and Napoli; and distinguished members of the Committee on Veterans' Affairs:

Thank you for allowing me to submit testimony in support of SB 414: An Act Crediting Military Experience and Training in Water or Wastewater Operations Toward Requirements for Licensure in Certain Occupations and SB 614: An Act Concerning Bus Public Transportation Charges for Veterans.

I was pleased to introduce both bills this session, which will benefit the men and women that served our nation and state with honor in the armed forces. The reason for both bills is best summarized by President Theodore Roosevelt when he said of our veterans, "A man who is good enough to shed his blood for the country is good enough to be given a square deal afterwards." These bills contribute to this "square deal" and support our veterans in Connecticut by keeping them in our workforce.

SB 414 will make jobs more accessible to our distinguished veterans. Employment and quality of life go hand in hand. This is especially true for our veterans that face barriers to employment after completing their time as members of the armed services.

Oftentimes, the experience that our servicemen and servicewomen gain during active-duty is highly specialized and valuable in today's workforce. This bill will expedite the time that is necessary for veterans to gain state licensure by recognizing their existing experience and applying it to the state's requirements for accreditation. These men and women, with direct experience and skills, will therefore be able to find jobs more quickly in Connecticut.

SB 614 will promote a higher quality of life by also providing access to jobs by way of transportation. This bill removes the financial barrier of our public bus system for veterans, ensuring that these men and women have a means to get to work.

In fact, I had a very productive meeting with our Dept. of Veterans' Affairs Commissioner earlier this month and we discussed the daily challenges that our veterans face. Employment is one such challenge and there is no question that transportation is necessary to find and maintain a job here in Connecticut.

This bill seeks to provide this service to the well-deserving veterans in the state at a minimum to zero additional cost.

It is very important that we provide our veterans with the ability to find and access work during these challenging economic times. I look forward to working with my colleagues on these important pieces of legislation.