



# Senate

General Assembly

**File No. 225**

February Session, 2022

Senate Bill No. 345

*Senate, March 30, 2022*

The Committee on Veterans' Affairs reported through SEN. CABRERA of the 17th Dist., Chairperson of the Committee on the part of the Senate, that the bill ought to pass.

***AN ACT EXEMPTING VETERANS FROM PAYMENT OF THE FARES FOR BUS PUBLIC TRANSPORTATION SERVICES.***

Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives in General Assembly convened:

1 Section 1. (NEW) (*Effective July 1, 2022*) Any person who is a veteran,  
2 as defined in subsection (a) of section 27-103 of the general statutes, shall  
3 be exempt from payment of the lawful charge for state-owned or state-  
4 controlled bus public transportation service, provided such person  
5 presents to the fare inspector, as defined in section 13b-2 of the general  
6 statutes, or the driver of such bus, as applicable, a motor vehicle  
7 operator's license or identity card indicating such person's status as a  
8 veteran, in accordance with subsection (e) of section 14-36h of the  
9 general statutes.

This act shall take effect as follows and shall amend the following sections:

Section 1	<i>July 1, 2022</i>	New section
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**VA** Joint Favorable

*The following Fiscal Impact Statement and Bill Analysis are prepared for the benefit of the members of the General Assembly, solely for purposes of information, summarization and explanation and do not represent the intent of the General Assembly or either chamber thereof for any purpose. In general, fiscal impacts are based upon a variety of informational sources, including the analyst's professional knowledge. Whenever applicable, agency data is consulted as part of the analysis, however final products do not necessarily reflect an assessment from any specific department.*

**OFA Fiscal Note**

**State Impact:**

Agency Affected	Fund-Effect	FY 23 \$	FY 24 \$
Department of Transportation	TF - Cost	See Below	See Below
Department of Motor Vehicles	TF - Potential Revenue Gain	Potential	Potential

Note: TF=Transportation Fund

**Municipal Impact:** None

**Explanation**

The bill requires the Department of Transportation (DOT) to exempt individuals who have a license/ID card indicating they are a veteran from fares on state-owned or controlled buses. There are an estimated 149,000 veterans in Connecticut; however, there are only an estimated 12,150 veterans who have a license/ID card indicating they are a veteran<sup>1</sup>, which is a requirement for receiving free bus service under the bill.

The number and frequency of veterans who currently ride the bus is unknown, therefore a range of potential costs will be discussed. If veterans license/ID holders ride the bus at the same rate as the population<sup>2</sup>, then the annual cost to the STF would be approximately \$234,000. If this population uses the bus twice as much as the population then the cost would be approximately \$468,000 annually. Alternatively, and to illustrate a plausible high-end scenario, if 10% of eligible veterans

<sup>1</sup> According to data from the Department of Motor Vehicles.

<sup>2</sup> The CT population is 3.6 million and there are approximately 39 million state passenger bus trips per year, or approximately 11 trips per person per year.

are heavy users of public bus services, meaning they regularly buy \$63 monthly bus passes, then the annual cost to the STF could be up to \$919,000.

Additionally, the bill results in a potential revenue gain to the STF due to individuals choosing to pay the \$30 fee for a veterans status license/ID card prior to their renewal date (adding the status during the standard renewal timeframe is free).

### ***The Out Years***

The annualized ongoing fiscal impact identified above would continue into the future subject to inflation and the number of veterans license /ID card holders.

**OLR Bill Analysis****SB 345*****AN ACT EXEMPTING VETERANS FROM PAYMENT OF THE FARES FOR BUS PUBLIC TRANSPORTATION SERVICES.*****SUMMARY**

This bill exempts veterans from paying the fare to ride on state-owned or -controlled public bus transportation services, if they present to the fare inspector or bus driver, as applicable, a driver's license or identity card showing their status as veterans.

By law, a veteran is anyone honorably discharged from or released under honorable conditions, or released with an other than honorable discharge based on a qualifying condition, from active service in the armed forces (CGS § 27-103, as amended by PA 21-79).

Existing law allows veterans to ask the Department of Veterans Affairs (DVA) to have their status as a veteran included on their driver's license or identity card. DVA must verify the status within 30 after receiving the request and notify the Department of Motor Vehicles (DMV) about it. The status must then be included on each original, renewal, or duplicate driver's license or identity card DMV issues to the veteran (CGS § 14-36h(e)).

EFFECTIVE DATE: July 1, 2022

**COMMITTEE ACTION**

Veterans' Affairs Committee

Joint Favorable

Yea 16    Nay 1    (03/15/2022)