



House of Representatives

General Assembly

File No. 176

February Session, 2024

Substitute House Bill No. 5404

House of Representatives, March 28, 2024

The Committee on Veterans' and Military Affairs reported through REP. NOLAN of the 39th Dist., Chairperson of the Committee on the part of the House, that the substitute bill ought to pass.

AN ACT CONCERNING MILITARY TRAINING AND EXPERIENCE AND THE DRIVER'S LICENSE ENDORSEMENT TO OPERATE FIRE APPARATUS.

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

1 Section 1. Subsection (d) of section 14-36a of the general statutes is
2 repealed and the following is substituted in lieu thereof (*Effective October*
3 *1, 2024*):

4 (d) (1) A license of any class that contains the designation "Q"
5 indicates eligibility to operate fire apparatus. A "Q" endorsement shall
6 signify that the holder has been trained to operate fire apparatus in
7 accordance with standards established by the Commission on Fire
8 Prevention and Control. [No such]

9 (2) (A) Except as provided in subparagraph (B) of this subdivision, no
10 "Q" endorsement shall be issued to any person until [he or she] such
11 person demonstrates personally to the commissioner, or the
12 commissioner's designee, including the Connecticut Fire Academy, any

13 regional fire school or the chief local fire official of any municipality as
14 defined in section 7-323j, by means of testing in a representative vehicle
15 that such person possesses the skills necessary for operation of fire
16 apparatus.

17 (B) If the holder of a license of any class is (i) a veteran who applies
18 to the commissioner for a "Q" endorsement not later than two years after
19 the date of discharge from the military and who, not more than two
20 years prior to such discharge, held a military operator's license to
21 operate a motor vehicle that is the equivalent of a motor vehicle that
22 carries a classification between Class 6 and Class 13, inclusive, under the
23 Federal Highway Administration vehicle classification system, or (ii) a
24 member of the armed forces or the National Guard who applies to the
25 commissioner for a "Q" endorsement and who currently holds a military
26 operator's license to operate a motor vehicle that is the equivalent of a
27 motor vehicle that carries a classification between Class 6 and Class 13,
28 inclusive, under the Federal Highway Administration vehicle
29 classification system, the commissioner shall waive the requirement
30 under subparagraph (A) of this subdivision to demonstrate that such
31 veteran or member possesses the skills necessary for operation of fire
32 apparatus. The commissioner shall prescribe the form and manner by
33 which such veteran or member shall apply for such waiver. As used in
34 this subparagraph, "veteran" and "armed forces" have the same
35 meanings as provided in section 27-103.

This act shall take effect as follows and shall amend the following sections:		
Section 1	October 1, 2024	14-36a(d)

VA *Joint Favorable Subst.*

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: None

Municipal Impact: None

Explanation

The bill, which does not have a fiscal impact, provides a waiver of the skills-based demonstration requirement for certain veterans and military personnel when applying to the Department of Motor Vehicles (DMV) for a Q-endorsement (i.e., to drive a fire truck). Administering the waiver is within DMV's existing expertise.

The Out Years

State Impact: None

Municipal Impact: None

OLR Bill Analysis**sHB 5404*****AN ACT CONCERNING MILITARY TRAINING AND EXPERIENCE AND THE DRIVER'S LICENSE ENDORSEMENT TO OPERATE FIRE APPARATUS.*****SUMMARY**

This bill allows veterans and members of the armed forces or National Guard (“members”) to apply to the Department of Motor Vehicles (DMV) for a waiver of the skills-based demonstration that current law requires of someone applying for a Q-endorsement. (This license endorsement authorizes holders to operate a fire apparatus (i.e., drive a fire truck).) To qualify under the bill, a member must:

1. be either a current member of the armed forces or National Guard or a veteran who was discharged no more than two years ago;
2. currently hold, or have held two years or less before being discharged, a military license to operate a vehicle that is the equivalent of a Class 6 through Class 13 vehicle under the Federal Highway Administration classification system (vehicles in these classes have at least six axles); and
3. apply for the skills-based demonstration waiver with the DMV, following a process the commissioner must set.

Under current law, individuals must have been trained to drive a firetruck according to Commission on Fire Prevention and Control standards and take the driving test on a representative vehicle. The bill waives the driving test but appears to keep the training requirement.

EFFECTIVE DATE: October 1, 2024

BACKGROUND

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 (i.e., the U.S. Army, Navy, Marine Corps, Coast Guard, Space Force, Air Force, and any of their reserve components, including the Connecticut National Guard when under federal service) (CGS § 27-103, as amended by PA 23-71).

COMMITTEE ACTION

Veterans' and Military Affairs Committee

Joint Favorable Substitute

Yea 20 Nay 0 (03/14/2024)