
Public Hearing

before

ASSEMBLY MILITARY AND VETERANS' AFFAIRS COMMITTEE

The public hearing will be held in accordance with Article IX, paragraph 1 of the New Jersey Constitution and Rule 19:3 of the General Assembly on the following Assembly Concurrent Resolution:

Assembly Concurrent Resolution 57

"Proposes constitutional amendment to extend veterans' property tax deduction and veterans' property tax exemption to veterans who did not serve in time of war or other emergency"

LOCATION: Committee Room 16
State House Annex
Trenton, New Jersey

DATE: December 6, 2019
2:00 p.m.

MEMBERS OF COMMITTEE PRESENT:

Assemblywoman Cleopatra G. Tucker, Chair
Assemblyman Joe Daniels, Vice Chair
Assemblyman Herb C. Conaway, Jr.



ALSO PRESENT:

Tracey F. Pino Murphy
Nicolas Soto
*Office of Legislative Services
Committee Aides*

Sherwood T. Goodenough
*Assembly Majority
Committee Aide*

Deborah DePiano
*Assembly Republican
Committee Aide*

***Hearing Recorded and Transcribed by
The Office of Legislative Services, Public Information Office,
Hearing Unit, State House Annex, PO 068, Trenton, New Jersey***

CLEOPATRA G. TUCKER
Chairwoman

WAYNE P. DEANGELO
Vice-Chairman

JOHN P. ARMATO
MATTHEW W. MILAM
RONALD S. DANCER
DIANNE C. GOVE



New Jersey State Legislature
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COMMITTEE
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TRENTON NJ 08625-0068

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PUBLIC HEARING NOTICE

The Assembly Military and Veterans' Affairs Committee will hold a public hearing on Friday, December 6, 2019 at 2:00 PM in Committee Room 16, 4th Floor, State House Annex, Trenton, New Jersey.

The public may address comments and questions to Tracey F. Pino Murphy, Committee Aide, or make bill status and scheduling inquiries to Sophia Love, Secretary, at (609)847-3890, fax (609)777-2998, or e-mail: OLSAideAMV@njleg.org. Written and electronic comments, questions and testimony submitted to the committee by the public, as well as recordings and transcripts, if any, of oral testimony, are government records and will be available to the public upon request.

The public hearing is being held in compliance with Article IX, paragraph 1 of the New Jersey Constitution and Rule 19:3 of the General Assembly on the following Assembly Concurrent Resolution:

ACR-57
Tucker/Andrzejczak/
Benson/Lampitt/
DeAngelo

Proposes constitutional amendment to extend veterans' property tax deduction and veterans' property tax exemption to veterans who did not serve in time of war or other emergency.

Persons wishing to testify should submit 15 copies of written testimony to the committee on the day of the hearing.

Issued 11/27/19

For reasonable accommodation of a disability call the telephone number or fax number above, or for persons with hearing loss dial 711 for NJ Relay. The provision of assistive listening devices requires 24 hours' notice. CART or sign language interpretation requires 5 days' notice.

For changes in schedule due to snow or other emergencies, see website <http://www.njleg.state.nj.us> or call 800-792-8630 (toll-free in NJ) or 609-847-3905.

**ASSEMBLY CONCURRENT
RESOLUTION No. 57**

**STATE OF NEW JERSEY
218th LEGISLATURE**

PRE-FILED FOR INTRODUCTION IN THE 2018 SESSION

Sponsored by:

Assemblywoman CLEOPATRA G. TUCKER

District 28 (Essex)

Assemblyman BOB ANDRZEJCZAK

District 1 (Atlantic, Cape May and Cumberland)

Assemblyman DANIEL R. BENSON

District 14 (Mercer and Middlesex)

Assemblywoman PAMELA R. LAMPITT

District 6 (Burlington and Camden)

Assemblyman WAYNE P. DEANGELO

District 14 (Mercer and Middlesex)

Co-Sponsored by:

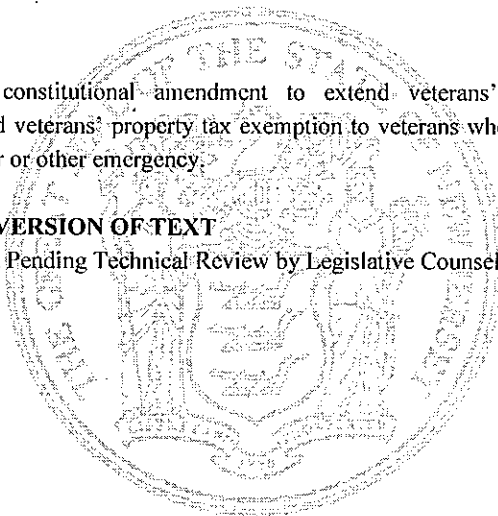
Assemblyman Dancer

SYNOPSIS

Proposes constitutional amendment to extend veterans' property tax deduction and veterans' property tax exemption to veterans who did not serve in time of war or other emergency.

CURRENT VERSION OF TEXT

Introduced Pending Technical Review by Legislative Counsel.



(Sponsorship Updated As Of: 11/08/2019)

1 **A CONCURRENT RESOLUTION** proposing to amend Article VIII,
2 Section I, paragraph 3 of the New Jersey Constitution.

3
4 **BE IT RESOLVED** *by the General Assembly of the State of New*
5 *Jersey (the Senate concurring):*

6
7 1. The following proposed amendment to the Constitution of
8 the State of New Jersey is hereby agreed to:

9
10 PROPOSED AMENDMENT

11 Amend Article VIII, Section I, paragraph 3 to read as follows:

12 3. Any citizen and resident of this State now or hereafter
13 honorably discharged or released under honorable circumstances
14 from active service, **[in time of war or other emergency]** as, from
15 time to time, defined by the Legislature, in any branch of the Armed
16 Forces of the United States shall be entitled, annually to a deduction
17 from the amount of any tax bill for taxes on real and personal
18 property, or both, including taxes attributable to a residential unit
19 held by a stockholder in a cooperative or mutual housing
20 corporation, in the sum of **[\$50 or if the amount of any such tax bill**
21 **shall be less than \$50, to a cancellation thereof, except that the**
22 **deduction or cancellation shall be \$100 in tax year 2000, \$150 in**
23 **tax year 2001, \$200 in tax year 2002 and] \$250 in each tax year**
24 **[thereafter], or if the amount of any such tax bill shall be less than**
25 **\$250, to a cancellation thereof.** The deduction or cancellation shall
26 not be altered or repealed. Any person hereinabove described who
27 has been or shall be declared by the **[United States Veterans**
28 **Administration] United States Department of Veterans Affairs,** or
29 its successor, to have a service-connected disability, shall be
30 entitled to such further deduction from taxation as from time to time
31 may be provided by law. The surviving spouse of any citizen and
32 resident of this State who has met or shall meet his or her death on
33 active duty **[in time of war or of other emergency]** as so defined in
34 any such service shall be entitled, during her widowhood or his
35 widowerhood, as the case may be, and while a resident of this State,
36 to the deduction or cancellation in this paragraph provided for
37 honorably discharged veterans and to such further deduction as
38 from time to time may be provided by law. The surviving spouse of
39 any citizen and resident of this State who has had or shall hereafter
40 have active service **[in time of war or of other emergency]** as so
41 defined in any branch of the Armed Forces of the United States and
42 who died or shall die while on active duty in any branch of the
43 Armed Forces of the United States, or who has been or may

44
EXPLANATION – Matter enclosed in bold-faced brackets **[thus]** in the above bill is
not enacted and is intended to be omitted in the law.

Matter underlined thus is new matter.

1 hereafter be honorably discharged or released under honorable
2 circumstances from active service [in time of war or of other
3 emergency] as so defined in any branch of the Armed Forces of the
4 United States shall be entitled, during her widowhood or his
5 widowerhood, as the case may be, and while a resident of this State,
6 to the deduction or cancellation in this paragraph provided for
7 honorably discharged veterans and to such further deductions as
8 from time to time may be provided by law.

9 (cf: Article VIII, Section I, paragraph 3 amended effective
10 December 2, 1999)

11
12 2. When this proposed amendment to the Constitution is finally
13 agreed to pursuant to Article IX, paragraph 1 of the Constitution, it
14 shall be submitted to the people at the next general election
15 occurring more than three months after the final agreement and
16 shall be published at least once in at least one newspaper of each
17 county designated by the President of the Senate, the Speaker of the
18 General Assembly and the Secretary of State, not less than three
19 months prior to the general election.

20
21 3. This proposed amendment to the Constitution shall be
22 submitted to the people at that election in the following manner and
23 form:

24 There shall be printed on each official ballot to be used at the
25 general election, the following:

26 a. In every municipality in which voting machines are not used,
27 a legend which shall immediately precede the question as follows:

28 If you favor the proposition printed below make a cross (X), plus
29 (+), or check (✓) in the square opposite the word "Yes." If you are
30 opposed thereto make a cross (X), plus (+) or check (✓) in the
31 square opposite the word "No."

32 b. In every municipality the following question:

	YES	<p>PROPERTY TAX DEDUCTION FOR PEACETIME VETERANS</p> <p>Do you approve amending the Constitution to give a \$250 property tax deduction to veterans who did not serve in time of war? The widow or widower of these veterans also would receive the deduction after the veteran's death.</p>
	NO	<p>INTERPRETIVE STATEMENT</p> <p>This amendment would give a \$250 property tax deduction to veterans who did not serve in time of war. The widow or widower of a veteran who did not serve in time of war would receive the deduction after the veteran's death. The amendment also extends the additional deduction for disabled veterans to veterans who became disabled during peacetime military service.</p> <p>Currently, these property tax deductions are only given to veterans who served during time of war. The amendment would give the deductions to veterans who did not serve in wartime.</p>

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STATEMENT

5 If approved by the voters of the State, this proposed
6 constitutional amendment would make honorably discharged
7 military veterans who did not serve during time of war or other
8 emergency eligible for the \$250 property tax deduction and the
9 property tax deduction granted by law to veterans with a service-
10 connected disability. Currently, these property tax benefits are
11 given only to honorably discharged military veterans who served
12 during time of war or other emergency.

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ASSEMBLYWOMAN CLEOPATRA G. TUCKER (Chair):

We're going to call this hearing to order.

First, we're going to have the pledge. (all recite the Pledge of Allegiance)

While we are still standing, I want to ask for a minute of silence due to the-- Today, we all know that at the Pensacola, Florida -- that there was a shooting there at one of our Naval bases. And last week (*sic*), there was also an incident at Pearl Harbor.

So we need to have a minute of silence for the victims and their families. (moment of silence observed)

Thank you.

Okay, can we get started, please?

MS. MURPHY (Committee Aide): I'll take a roll call.

Assemblywoman Gove is not here.

Assemblyman Dancer could not make it.

Assemblyman Milam is not here.

Assemblyman Conaway.

ASSEMBLYMAN CONAWAY: Here.

MS. MURPHY: Vice Chair Danielsen.

ASSEMBLYMAN JOE DANIELSEN (Vice Chair): Here.

MS. MURPHY: Chairwoman Tucker.

ASSEMBLYWOMAN TUCKER: Here.

MS. MURPHY: ACR-57: If approved by the voters of the state, this proposed constitutional amendment would make honorably discharged military veterans, who did not serve during time of war or other emergency,

eligible for the \$250 property tax deduction and the property tax deduction granted by law to veterans with a service-connected disability.

Currently, these property tax benefits are given only to honorably discharged military veterans who served during time of war or other emergency.

ASSEMBLYWOMAN TUCKER: Norm Glover, Military Order of the Purple Heart.

SERGEANT NORM GLOVER: Thank you, Madam Chair; Committee.

I represent the Military Order of the Purple Heart.

We are in favor of the Bill.

Without going into a lengthy reason why, one of the examples that I'll give you is that I have a family member, now deceased, 12 years Special Forces. And by New Jersey standard, he's not a veteran.

And this Bill will help in the efforts to recognize people who have served honorably as veterans.

And I don't have anything else to say. It was quick, right?

ASSEMBLYWOMAN TUCKER: Okay, thank you.

SERGEANT GLOVER: All right; thank you.

ASSEMBLYWOMAN TUCKER: We're going to just open it up -- I'll just open it up to anyone else who would like to come up and make a statement or a comment in reference to this Resolution. (no response)

No?

Well, what about anybody here (indicates)?

ASSEMBLYMAN CONAWAY: Well, I would say -- I thank the Chairwoman for bringing forth this Resolution on the constitutional amendment.

I've been involved with veteran service organizations for the many years of my career. I know that this is something that many veterans have wanted for some time, and I am hopeful that it will make its way through the process and be presented to the voters.

I believe when it reaches the voters they will view it favorably, and we will recognize, as mentioned, the service and the sacrifices of veterans who have served their country honorably, even though they were not serving at a time of conflict.

So thank you for bringing this forward. I appreciate your leadership on this and, hopefully, the State of New Jersey will appreciate the same and will pay the honor that's due.

ASSEMBLYMAN DANIELSEN: Thank you, Chairwoman.

It's an honor to sit on the Committee today and give consideration to this Bill.

I think this is long overdue, and probably still falls short in what I believe we should be doing for our veterans.

In the history of our country, I don't think we have done enough for our veterans. As a veteran myself, I speak for my three brothers, my father, his brother, my only uncle, my grandfather and his brother, my two nieces and nephews on one side, two nieces and nephews on the other -- all of us have a 115-year history of being Army veterans. (applause)

Thank you.

And I can say, from my personal observations, we are just simply not doing enough for veterans. It's irrelevant, sometimes, if they saw combat or not. The cost that veterans go through to serve, to stay ready, and to perform has a cost that you can't always see. A gesture like this is very appropriate. I wish we could do more.

Thank you, Chairwoman.

ASSEMBLYWOMAN TUCKER: Thank you for your comments.

I introduced this some time ago, and have been trying to do more every year. This has been introduced for the past eight years and, hopefully, we can get this passed and go to the voters.

My comments today are very strong because, the last two incidents happened in the last week. It just goes to say you don't have to be on the front line or boots on the ground. You can get injured or killed right here in the United States. And for them not to be considered as veterans, based on the time they served or an emergency -- it was an emergency this morning; it was an emergency last week.

And so when do we start-- Everything should be classified the same, and it's just the same for me, you know, just to hear these things that are happening right here every day. And they didn't get drafted to do this service; a lot of these men and women volunteered to serve our country, to protect us.

So I really hope that we can move it forward and it can get on the ballot, so we can serve them the way we should serve them, and just not still give lip service to them, you know? Because we can do a lot of lip service, but not a lot of action.

So I am very glad that I got this far with it, because it's been a long time just to get it to this point. So I'm hopeful that we can continue, and we can get it on the ballot.

And thank you for coming down here on a Friday, on late notice.
(laughter) I really appreciate you all coming, and thank you again.

And I'm very hopeful that we can do something to make our veterans here in the State of New Jersey proud of us. And just -- we don't want to be the last one to do everything; we want to be on top of certain things, and I think this is one of the most important things that we can be on top of.

Thank you for coming.

The meeting is adjourned.

(MEETING CONCLUDED)