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PUBLIC HEARING  
before  
ASSEMBLY SELECT COMMITTEE ON VETERANS' AFFAIRS  
Veterans' Property Tax Deduction

February 19, 1987  
Room 341  
State House Annex  
Trenton, New Jersey

MEMBERS OF COMMITTEE PRESENT:

Assemblyman Peter J. Genova, Chairman  
Assemblyman Paul DiGaetano  
Assemblyman D. Bennett Mazur  
Assemblyman Thomas H. Paterniti

ALSO PRESENT:

Brian S. Volz  
Office of Legislative Services  
Aide, Assembly Veterans' Affairs Committee

\* \* \* \* \*

Hearing Recorded and Transcribed by  
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Public Information Office  
Hearing Unit  
State House Annex  
CN 068  
Trenton, New Jersey 08625

New Jersey State Library

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J. GENOVA  
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THOMAS H. PATERNITI

**New Jersey State Legislature**  
**ASSEMBLY SELECT COMMITTEE**  
**ON VETERANS' AFFAIRS**  
STATE HOUSE ANNEX, CN-068  
TRENTON, NEW JERSEY 08625  
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**NOTICE OF PUBLIC HEARING**

**February 9, 1987**

**The Assembly Select Committee on Veterans' Affairs will hold a Public Hearing on the Veterans' Property Tax deduction on Thursday, February 19, 1987, at 9:30 A.M. in Room 341 of the State House Annex, Trenton.**

**Anyone wishing to testify should contact Brian Volz, Aide to the Committee, at (609) 292-9106.**

## TABLE OF CONTENTS

	<u>Page</u>
Marc Worchel Legislative Chairman Disabled American Veterans Department of New Jersey	5
Robert Anderson Department Commander Disabled American Veterans Department of New Jersey	6
Irving Finver Joint Veterans' Legislative Committee of Bergen County	8
Samuel Lo Bue POW Veteran of World War II	12

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mjz: 1-19



ASSEMBLYMAN PETER J. GENOVA (Chairman): Let's get started. We have a heavy agenda in the Assembly today. As you know, they are combined sessions -- the Senate and the Assembly. There are committee hearings, not only select committee hearings, but I believe there are other committee chairmen who have called hearings for this morning, and there is going to be a lot of controversy on the floor with some important pieces of legislation. It is just going to be a very, very hectic day. So, why don't we get started. After we have heard the testimony, we will allow anyone who is here to go lobby on behalf of other bills, or if you have other business to take care of, you will have time to do that.

ASSEMBLYMAN PATERNITI: Mr. Chairman?

ASSEMBLYMAN GENOVA: Yes?

ASSEMBLYMAN PATERNITI: I believe at the last session I asked for copies of the bills, and so on and so forth, but again we didn't receive them. You know, we get these dropped on us every time we come into a meeting.

ASSEMBLYMAN GENOVA: Copies of what bills?

ASSEMBLYMAN PATERNITI: What the agenda was going to be. All I got was a notice.

ASSEMBLYMAN GENOVA: This is not an established agenda meeting. If you will read your hearing notice--

ASSEMBLYMAN PATERNITI: We are not going to release these bills which are listed?

ASSEMBLYMAN GENOVA: No, no. These were provided by the Office of Legislative Services, just as a matter of information to us.

ASSEMBLYMAN PATERNITI: Okay; all right.

ASSEMBLYMAN GENOVA: It is not the intent of this Chairman, or any member of this Committee, to not keep other members informed, which I feel has been implied in the past. What we are going to do is make sure that everybody knows exactly what is before us on any given agenda day. You will be supplied with the appropriate information.

ASSEMBLYMAN DiGAETANO: The bills in the packet, Mr. Chairman.

ASSEMBLYMAN GENOVA: No. I believe what the Assemblyman was alluding to-- was that he did not know in advance-- He feels that maybe there should be an agenda published prior, and we are not--

One of the many areas that have been expressed to us as needing some immediate attention, as you all know, is the area of property tax deductions for veterans. We have addressed many key issues, I feel, that are important, and of great interest to the veterans' community. This is one I would like to-- This is one I checked with Brian on to see whether or not it would be appropriate to conduct a public hearing or two to see exactly what the feelings of our veterans and their leadership are.

Again, I am extremely disappointed that we don't have many more people here to testify on behalf of this particular initiative. That, of course, is to increase from the present \$50 that is afforded veterans -- qualified veterans -- anywhere up to \$125 for deductions.

What Brian has provided us with here-- Brian, at this time, I would like you to please read, for the record, the information you have provided, which illustrates the bills which have been introduced to date regarding veterans' property tax deductions.

MR. VOLZ (Committee Aide): Several bills have already been introduced in the Legislature: Assembly Bill 879, by Peter Genova, extends eligibility of veterans' property tax deductions to anyone who served at least 180 days of active duty in the armed forces. In the Senate, the bill is 475, by Senator Peter Garibaldi. Assembly Bill 513, by Thomas Shusted, redefines the terms "veteran" and "veterans' property tax deduction law" to include anyone who has served 181 days active duty in the armed forces, and Assembly Bill 534, also by

Assemblyman Shusted, which creates a veterans' property tax deduction for serving at least 181 days in active service in the armed forces, and an additional \$50 deduction for combat service. Assembly Bill 539 creates a veterans' property tax deduction for anyone honorably discharged with at least 181 days of active service in the armed forces, provides a serviceman's deduction for those who are on active duty in the armed forces, and an additional \$50 combat service deduction for active service in a combat theater. Assembly Concurrent Resolution 29 has been proposed for a constitutional amendment to implement it.

Assembly Bill 859 by, Assemblyman Zecker, increases the veterans' property tax deduction from \$50 to \$100, and the concurrent bill in the Senate is 619, by Senator Bassano. Assembly Bill 2206, by Assemblyman Moran, provides that veterans' property tax deduction be available to those veterans whose home ownership is in the form of shares and cooperative housing, and the Senate version is 457, by Senator Garibaldi. Senate Bill 2075, by Senator Bubba, permits residents in New Jersey who have been citizens of the United States for at least 10 years, and who have had active service in time of war as a member of the armed forces of Poland or Czechoslovakia against an enemy of the United States, to receive a \$50 property tax deduction. There is a Senate Concurrent Resolution 83 to amend the Constitution.

ASSEMBLYMAN GENOVA: Thank you, Brian. As many of you may know, there were many more bills in the Legislature prior to this new session, but the sponsors chose not to prefile them, probably because they weren't moving. I would hope it is going to be the immediate goal of this Committee to make the appropriate committee chairman know that he or she has to post, per our recommendation, the bill that we choose which is going to provide additional funding -- or, excuse me -- the ability to decrease -- reduce the property tax figure for veterans,



because I believe the \$50 figure is antiquated. It certainly is not in line with today's economy. The veterans have been holding on long enough, and I feel that we, as a Committee on behalf of veterans, should take appropriate action and make an appropriate recommendation, and put as much pressure on the committee chairman as possible to release the bill and have it considered for a vote in the Assembly.

Prior to opening the hearing up to the public, I would like to ask -- as I always do -- our Committee members if they would like to say a few words about this particular topic before us this morning. Tom?

ASSEMBLYMAN PATERNITI: First of all, I think this has a lot of merit, but I truly feel that as long as you want to give them the extra \$50-- A while back I introduced a bill where the veterans would get a bonus, something we had promised them since World War II, which this State has never come across with -- which they have never received. They have always talked about the cost. I introduced a bill where they could have written-- If a person had served overseas, he would get \$300. If a person had served stateside, he would get \$200. To make it a little bit easier, because of budget constraints, I made it that they could write off \$50 per year -- off their State income tax, and this way we would have fulfilled a commitment which they really rightfully deserve.

I think if we are going to start wanting to give them additional moneys in all these various categories-- I have seen a list which includes people who have never even served in our own armed forces in this country. I think it is about time our veterans got their bonus, which was promised to them right after World War II, which they never received.

The legislation has been in-- It was in in the last session; it has been in in this session. There has been no move to actually give them what they rightfully deserve, what was promised to them.

ASSEMBLYMAN GENOVA: What was the reason why it wasn't moved last session?

ASSEMBLYMAN PATERNITI: It was at the end of the session; it was kind of late. I reintroduced-- In fact, I introduced two bills. Originally, it was felt that to give it out in one lump sum would be costly, so in this session I introduced the one where they could write it off under income tax at \$50 per year. Therefore, if someone served overseas, it would write off over a period of six years, and if he served stateside, he would write it off over a period of four years, but at least we would have kept our commitment, and it wouldn't be that much of a constraint on the budget.

But, when I start seeing bills where they want to give it to people who have served in Poland and Czechoslovakia-- That could be extended to people who served in England--

ASSEMBLYMAN DiGAETANO: Italy.

ASSEMBLYMAN PATERNITI: Well, four million other countries. You know, I think our guys come first. That is the way I feel about it.

ASSEMBLYMAN GENOVA: Thanks.

ASSEMBLYMAN PATERNITI: And women, as well.

ASSEMBLYMAN MAZUR: I think Assemblyman Paterniti's viewpoints are well-expressed.

ASSEMBLYMAN GENOVA: Okay, fine. Brian, do you have a list of names of people who would like to testify?

MR. VOLZ: No, I don't. We only had one person call ahead of time.

ASSEMBLYMAN GENOVA: Is there anyone who would like to speak? (affirmative response) Name and affiliation, please.

M A R C W O R C H E L: My name is Marc Worchel. I represent the Disabled American Veterans Department of New Jersey. I am Legislative Chairman.

I really don't have too much to say, except for the fact that A-859, which increases the veterans' property tax

deduction from \$50 to \$100, is certainly in favor with the Disabled American Veterans Department of New Jersey. Other than that, I really have nothing to say on whatever else is on this agenda.

ASSEMBLYMAN GENOVA: If I am not mistaken, Marc -- and I am going to have Brian research this -- I believe this Committee took some action on A-859 at one time.

MR. VOLZ: They recommended to the Revenue Finance Committee that they move this bill.

MR. WORCHEL: I believe I was told that at one time.

ASSEMBLYMAN GENOVA: Okay. This was the one we directed to be moved?

MR. VOLZ: Yes.

MR. WORCHEL: I, too, would like to say that I am -- as you, Mr. Chairman, had stated previously -- sorry there are not more constituents from the veterans' community out here today. I received a letter in the mail from your office, or whatever, and I assume that a lot of other veterans did also. Why they are not here, I don't know. We do have with us our Department Commander for the Disabled American Veterans today, Mr. Robert Anderson. Maybe he would like to say something.

That's it for me. Thanks for your time.

R O B E R T   A N D E R S O N: Good morning. I, along with Marc-- We talked this over, and I feel, as a combat veteran, as if the increase should go to all veterans. I also feel strongly about A-2206, which is actually ownership of properties -- real estate, real property -- in cooperative housing.

I would like to say something about this \$50 to a \$100 increase. If I am not mistaken, the \$50 went into effect in the 1940s sometime. If we were just to consider the cost of living increase in any field, the lowest figure you could figure, it would far exceed the \$50 increase that is being presented here. So, it's not asking a hell of a lot.

I happened to be at your meeting regarding the beginning of the Department of Veterans' Affairs. I wanted to speak again after making my presentation, when one of the reporters got up and I heard of an article written in a paper in the southern part of New Jersey, that we should be thinking of cutting veterans' benefits instead of increasing them because of the decline in the veteran population. I would like to say this, and I think we should all take note of it: I am allowed to sit here, and you are allowed to sit up there voicing your opinion. And, that man who wrote the article in that paper had the right to express his freedom -- his freedom of the press. None of these freedoms would be available to us if it weren't for the veterans of our country, who gave up their livelihoods, went overseas, lost limbs, gave blood, lost their lives, and gave up much in compensation, as far as jobs were concerned.

So, a \$50 increase, I don't think is asking too much for the veterans of this State. I again go along with Assemblyman Paterniti about the veterans' bonus. I think there should be strong consideration given to that. Let the people be made aware that the veterans are responsible for the government we have here today.

Thank you.

ASSEMBLYMAN GENOVA: I am familiar with that article. It appeared in the-- Was it in The Courier Post, in southern New Jersey?

MR. ANDERSON: I don't know; I just heard about it.

ASSEMBLYMAN GENOVA: It was a shame; it was a disgrace. There was one response to it, and it was a good response. I was very pleased to see that. I forget the gentleman's name who wrote it. I felt very badly that more veterans didn't take the initiative to respond to it.

It was an article, gentlemen, that indicated that just because an individual served his country, or her country, why

should he or she be given preferential treatment in any capacity whatsoever? It was outrageous. I just can't believe the editorial staff of that newspaper allowed that staff writer to submit it, because it certainly did offend me, as a veteran, and it should have offended the over 900,000 veterans of this State. In the short period of 18 months since I won the special election, I never witnessed such a way of extending arrogance to any issue like that article did. It was disgusting. I am pleased that you are aware of it. I hope that you people, in the future when you do see something like that, Mr. Commander, will have your membership respond.

MR. ANDERSON: I didn't hear about this until very late. But, again, he had the right to speak and present his case, because of the veterans he is fighting against. He has that freedom that we fought for. That is what I am getting at.

Thank you, gentlemen.

ASSEMBLYMAN GENOVA: Irving Finver?

I R V I N G F I N V E R: My name is Irving Finver. I represent the Joint Veterans' Legislative Committee of Bergen County. On behalf of the thousands of veteran property owners in Bergen County, I am pleased to be here to voice my support for the action this Committee is undertaking on the property tax deduction.

Last year, I believe this Committee was talking somewhere in the neighborhood of a \$125 deduction. I see now that Assembly Bill 859 is going from \$50 to \$100. I don't see anyone introducing a bill going to \$125, or as we in Bergen County have been asking for, \$150 as a minimum.

We are also in favor of A-2206 for giving the same veteran a deduction on cooperative housing. It is simply a different form of ownership, and they should not be penalized because they chose one form of ownership, a co-op, over an individually owned home.

I am sorry for the small turnout here this morning also, but-- I don't know how many of you are aware, but

Stanley Weiss (phonetic spelling) just came out of the hospital after an attack of angina, so he can't be here this morning. I spoke to him yesterday. On top of that, he has a very bad cold, and he certainly couldn't be here today to express his thoughts on the matter.

I am sorry I couldn't make the December meeting, when you spoke about having a separate cabinet post for the handling of veteran affairs, and taking it out of Human Services. We are strongly in favor of having a separate entity. We feel the veteran population is being done a disservice, because the energies that are expended in other areas are taking away from those which should be expended on behalf of the veteran population.

While I have the floor, I would like to make a comment regarding the sales tax bill that is bogged down in the two Finance Committees -- the Senate and the Assembly. Now, for some reason, this Committee or the membership or the leadership is not pushing the Finance Committee to get it out of their -- or off their agenda to get it on the floor for a vote. Let's count heads. From what I understand, the finance group has put a million dollar price tag on that bill. Where in the world would the veteran population, or the veterans' organizations, spend in excess of \$16,500,000 a year to generate the one million dollar price tag that that Committee or that person put on it? From what I understand, when the Treasury Department does not like a bill, they purposely put a high price tag on it. That should be investigated very, very carefully. That million dollars is outrageous. At no time could the veterans' organizations expend \$16,500,000 on anything for the veteran program, or for their own use. This excludes automobiles, and we are not even asking for automobiles to be included.

Talking about the other house, I just have to make a comment. I was promised by Senator Russo that if I had any bill I wanted taken out of committee that was bogged down, to



notify him, and he would take action on it because he wants everything on the floor. Well, lip-service is very good. I wrote to him, and I wrote to the Chairman of the Finance Committee, to get that bill on the floor, and it is still bogged down in committee. The Senate is just as bad as the Assembly. It is bogged down in committee, and I wish you gentlemen would use whatever pressure, efforts, and influence you have to get it out of committee for a floor vote. Let's see where the chips are. Let's count heads, because we in Bergen County are going to watch votes, and we are going to tell our people how the Legislature votes. The other organizations -- the DAV, the Legion, the VFW -- are going to do the same thing.

So, let's see where we can go, gentlemen. Thank you for your time.

ASSEMBLYMAN GENOVA: Thanks, Irv. I would like to ask you, Irv, what type of efforts has the veteran community taken upon themselves to notify their legislators -- their Assemblymen and their Senators?

MR. FINVER: I have made phone calls; I have written letters.

ASSEMBLYMAN GENOVA: Have you written letters to the appropriate people?

MR. FINVER: I have written letters to the chairmen of the various committees involved.

ASSEMBLYMAN GENOVA: Okay.

MR. FINVER: I think I sent you copies. If I didn't, I'm sorry. I sent a letter to Senator Russo, who made a promise to me in writing that if I--

ASSEMBLYMAN GENOVA: Okay, well, I don't want to get into that.

MR. FINVER: No, I don't want to get involved with the Senate bill, but so far as the Assembly bill, it is still bogged down in committee.

ASSEMBLYMAN GENOVA: The point I am trying to make is, if you have something as an individual, or as a cohesive body representing a particular post, or any other veterans' facility, you should have yourself some type of a demonstration program, where you go out and send letters to your-- I mean, it happens all the time. We receive letters in our district offices from constituents. They are just reproduced, but they were told to send a particular letter on a particular topic, to put pressure on their Assemblymen and their Senators.

I've got to tell you, and I am going to be quite honest with you, when I took this position a year ago, I thought the veterans' community was together, again, as I said before, a cohesive body of people, who wanted all of their concerns and issues placed under one umbrella, and would lobby on behalf of that as one body. I haven't seen that; I haven't seen that at all. They have not been together on any of the big initiatives that we have put through. They have not lobbied for them. They have not expressed a great interest to me or to the Governor or to the Attorney General or to anyone else, that they are grouped together, working together, on behalf of an issue they want. I haven't seen it.

MR. FINVER: Well, we'll do that.

ASSEMBLYMAN GENOVA: I tried to get mailing lists of your post members in the American Legion, the DAV, and the VFW. We can't even get the mailing lists of the various organizations, because it is against policy. What we are trying to do, through Brian's efforts (referring to Committee Aide) -- and Brian has been great in this-- He has been trying to keep every post updated on the actions we have taken on several bills. But, we can't do that. Unless there is a cooperative effort between all the relative bodies in the veterans' community and this body here, we are not going to bring about positive results.

MR. FINVER: I know I speak for six major organizations in Bergen County: the Jewish War Veterans, the Catholic War Veterans, the AMVETS, the American Legion, the Disabled American Veterans, and the VFW.

ASSEMBLYMAN GENOVA: I have to say that the only veterans' group that has come through with a list so that we could send out our correspondence -- in fact, I have to give it to Brian; it was sent to my office -- was the Jewish War Veterans, a gentleman by the name of Dan Kaplan.

MR. FINVER: Danny, I understand, is one of your aides.

ASSEMBLYMAN GENOVA: Yeah.

MR. FINVER: Danny has access to all of those.

ASSEMBLYMAN GENOVA: Okay, let's continue with the hearing. Is there anyone else who would like to speak? (affirmative response)

SAMUEL LOBUE: I asked Brian if I could speak, and he gave me the okay.

ASSEMBLYMAN GENOVA: Name, address, and who you represent.

MR. LO BUE: My name is Samuel Lo Bue. I am a life member of many organizations, so I am going to speak as a POW, so you will know that I have been in combat. I have been wounded. I showed you the picture one time, I think it was at Freehold, or Vineland. So, I am not throwing manure around.

I am in favor of A-859 -- my hearing aid is giving me a problem -- and also A-2206. A lot of veterans who are single, or who are widowers, don't want to own a house, so they get an apartment or a small unit in a complex. They say, "You know what, I have to pay Federal income tax and State income tax just like any other veteran. How come I am discriminated against?" That is discrimination when certain veterans are not getting the deduction they deserve.

When Assemblyman Moran wrote this bill, he must have had a little bit of a kind heart toward those who are single

and aging. Now, I might lose my wife pretty soon. If I do, I am not going to maintain a big house. In the first place, I am not a housekeeper. I don't know how to cook. So, I think that A-2206 is a very, very needed bill. When I go back to my outfit, I will tell them, "I did speak for you, but if it does not pass, don't blame me because I got my exemption and you didn't. It is because the State of New Jersey doesn't want to give it to you." I am going to bring this copy home, and I will tick off which two bills I am speaking about as a member of the POW.

Now, the DAV coordinator is a school teacher. He is a single man who lives in an apartment. He is leasing his apartment from month to month. His lease is up--

ASSEMBLYMAN GENOVA: What does he do?

MR. LO BUE: He is leasing.

ASSEMBLYMAN GENOVA: Who is the gentleman?

MR. LO BUE: Carl Montgomery.

ASSEMBLYMAN GENOVA: Who does he represent?

MR. LO BUE: The DAV. I know him. He is the Coordinator of the Aging Veterans' Assistance Program. Now, we are all volunteers in the Aging Veterans' Assistance Program, including me. They figured that I have some knowledge. I have no more knowledge than the cat in the moon. All I have is the guts to face a politician and tell him what I feel about certain things.

I hope you don't resent me saying that I have guts. It took guts for us to go into combat; it took guts for us to fight to the bitter end. I was left in the field for dead by my own buddies, and by the Germans. The counterattack was what saved me. The Germans did not want to get involved in the counterattack. One German kicked all the corpses in the ribs, and the one who groaned was me. He was so happy, he dropped his gun, and he slapped my face. Now, there was no communication between me and him, except that I had groaned

real loud. (witness demonstrates groans for Committee) I did have some shock when I passed out, but I don't remember any pain. But when he kicked me in the rib-- I had pain in the rib, but it wasn't the rib I was worrying about. I was worried about this here hot stuff that was running down my buttocks. That was all the blood -- for the six hours I was laying out there.

Now, you say, "You should have been dead by then." Don't forget, the blood will congeal. That is how I ended up with a heart attack at age 51. I must have had real thick blood. Every time I moved it would bleed. They assumed that I was a dead person. Not one German put a bayonet through me. Not one German ran a burp gun through me. It was due to the grave registration officer of the Germans -- who I pray for every night -- who kicked me in the rib and made me groan--

I was not forced to go to the prison camp. I went voluntarily. I was born in Sicily. I was not allowed to join the Coast Guard because I was an enemy alien citizen. Discrimination? Yes. I called it discrimination. The way they discriminated-- When the Japanese were putting--

ASSEMBLYMAN GENOVA: Excuse me, Sam. Let's get back to the bills. Which bill are you in favor of?

MR. LO BUE: Both of them.

ASSEMBLYMAN GENOVA: A-859 and A-2206?

MR. LO BUE: Yeah.

ASSEMBLYMAN GENOVA: Okay.

MR. LO BUE: I was telling you why.

ASSEMBLYMAN GENOVA: Yeah, I understand. If I went through that, I would be in favor of both of them.

MR. LO BUE: I do want Carl Montgomery happy.

ASSEMBLYMAN GENOVA: Okay.

MR. LO BUE: Because he is a gentleman, a retired school teacher, and he took that program over. I'm glad that Herb Johnson, our National Service Officer in Newark -- he

works out of Newark, and lives in Ewing -- is a life member of our chapter of the DAV. But, I am not only speaking for the DAV. I am speaking as a POW, and I am a life member of a lot of organizations. I could have said the Veterans of Foreign Wars, too.

ASSEMBLYMAN GENOVA: That's right.

MR. LO BUE: Mr. Chairman, I do not want lip service again, from this Committee, or from any committee. I want action. If it doesn't pass, I am going to tell my buddies-- I'll tell the Allied Council, because I am on the Legislative Committee of the Allied Council, "I did my best." You've seen me four times already, haven't you, Mr. Chairman?

ASSEMBLYMAN GENOVA: Sure, Sam.

MR. LO BUE: And no action. I feel hurt. Now, if these two bills pass, I can say, "Well, at least I accomplished two bills -- I helped to accomplish two bills," -- with the aid of my fellow veterans, not by myself, and with the sympathy of the Committee which sits before me. I want you to be sympathetic. Walk in my shoes before you say whether we should have it.

I concur with the gentleman who said a \$50 increase-- Do you know that our property value went up \$13,000 without a referendum? Why? That \$50 deduction-- I don't know if that is going to cover that \$13,000 evaluation on our property.

ASSEMBLYMAN GENOVA: It is not intended to. This is a-- Obviously it can't.

MR. LO BUE: A \$50 increase is not going to cover the increase on my property.

ASSEMBLYMAN GENOVA: The original deduction -- the ability to deduct -- was our intention.

MR. LO BUE: Yeah.

ASSEMBLYMAN GENOVA: It was an incentive--

MR. LO BUE: I can't hear you.

ASSEMBLYMAN GENOVA: It was an incentive--



MR. LO BUE: I'm sorry, Mr. Chairman.

ASSEMBLYMAN GENOVA: Well, anyway, any deduction we offer -- or that we pass -- is not to offset any increase in taxes.

MR. LO BUE: That is why I say--

ASSEMBLYMAN GENOVA: Don't misunderstand the concept of it.

MR. LO BUE: No, no. Like the gentleman said, "It's peanuts."

ASSEMBLYMAN GENOVA: Well, we know what your feelings are, Sam. As I mentioned, we have already recommended the passage of A-859, and we will take a good look at A-2206.

MR. LO BUE: Could you tell me what happened to A-810?

ASSEMBLYMAN GENOVA: What happened to 810?

MR. LO BUE: Yes. That's sales tax and users fee tax of veterans' homes. I am talking about the clubhouses.

ASSEMBLYMAN GENOVA: That's 1010.

MR. LO BUE: Yeah, A-1010.

ASSEMBLYMAN GENOVA: That is still in Appropriations, as Mr. Finver mentioned.

MR. LO BUE: Well, this is sorely needed by the veterans' organizations. I told you in the original-- I didn't get a tape to document what was said at the meeting.

ASSEMBLYMAN GENOVA: Did you request it?

MR. LO BUE: Did I request it? Don't blame Brian.

ASSEMBLYMAN GENOVA: No, I am not blaming Brian. I was just going to ask him. Brian, are we getting a lot of requests for the tapes? (inaudible response)

MR. LO BUE: I heard they were going to buy a new machine.

ASSEMBLYMAN GENOVA: Okay.

MR. LO BUE: And David Inverso promised me, since I was the first name on the list, that he would give me the first tape, so I could document that I do go out of my house to try to help.

ASSEMBLYMAN GENOVA: Sure.

MR. LO BUE: I don't want to see slums made out of veterans' homes. Some of those clubhouses are deteriorating and falling apart. The public is not cooperating in donating money. We are supposed to take care of service work, and then with what is left over we try to repair our buildings. When you start having dinner dances and selling tickets-- It's like our government.

ASSEMBLYMAN GENOVA: We understand the need for that.

MR. LO BUE: The government, when it asks for money, money, money-- We feel you are overdoing it. Well, we are overdoing it when we ask for money from the public to keep our houses.

Now, you can help us by telling the Assembly Appropriations Committee-- Is it the Assembly Appropriations Committee?

ASSEMBLYMAN GENOVA: Yeah. We are not going to tell them. We are going to rely on the veterans to lobby for it. This is not a Committee that is made up of members who are going to lobby on behalf of one bill. We are making recommendations on bills which we feel are appropriate at this time.

MR. LO BUE: Oh, you did -- strong recommendations by you people?

ASSEMBLYMAN GENOVA: No, we didn't. Is there anyone else who would like to testify? (no response) Seeing no one, I will--

MR. FINVER: May I make one more comment, Mr. Chairman?

ASSEMBLYMAN GENOVA: Yes.

MR. FINVER: While the members of the Committee are here-- This is not on the sales tax; it is not on the property tax. It is about some of the clubhouses that some of the posts have, and about the fire inspection fees.

ASSEMBLYMAN PATERNITI: That is my bill. I have had that in since the beginning of the year. In fact, I believe it is in Assemblyman Shusted's Committee. -- The Vice Chairman has been writing to him. We wrote to Hardwick; we wrote to everybody. They haven't moved that bill; it has been sitting there. They have taken no action on it. That happens to be my legislation, and I am very upset about it. I continuously get letters on it.

ASSEMBLYMAN GENOVA: Well, that's fine, but wait a second now. This is not a forum to direct arrows at the Speaker for not moving a bill, because the Speaker obviously can't do a thing to the bill until it comes before him, or to Assemblyman Shusted.

ASSEMBLYMAN PATERNITI: The Chairman has done absolutely nothing. He has had letters from veterans' groups.

ASSEMBLYMAN GENOVA: What you should do, then, instead of taking issue with them when they are not here, is either take issue with them personally, or I recommend that you go to your veterans and tell them that, or go to your newspapers. But this Committee hearing is not going to be conducted for disputing whether or not a bill is being heard in committee. That is inappropriate. It should not be done. If I were in the Minority, I would not take on the Majority party and make charges of that nature.

ASSEMBLYMAN PATERNITI: Well, look at this list of bills we have today. Every one is a Republican bill. There are many Democratic bills, but you haven't even put one on the agenda.

ASSEMBLYMAN GENOVA: What do you mean, Democratic bills that pertain to property tax deduction?

ASSEMBLYMAN PATERNITI: That's right. When I chaired the Committee on Aging, I had Republican and Democratic bills. You check my record -- 90% of the bills that came out of my Committee. That is not happening with this Committee or with other committees.

ASSEMBLYMAN GENOVA: Wait a second. Brian, the bills that you prepared for us on property tax deduction-- Are these the only bills in the house?

MR. VOLZ: These are all the bills that have been listed in the Legislative Index. I didn't have time to go through every single bill that has been introduced.

ASSEMBLYMAN PATERNITI: What about the veterans' bonus?

ASSEMBLYMAN GENOVA: That was not part of this Committee hearing, Tom -- the veterans' bonus.

ASSEMBLYMAN PATERNITI: I don't see why it shouldn't have been. It affects them. It would put money in their pockets. It is something that they were promised since World War II.

ASSEMBLYMAN GENOVA: Tom, all I can say-- The impression I am getting right now is just-- In fact, you should wait until you have a full house before you grandstand, Tom.

ASSEMBLYMAN PATERNITI: I am not grandstanding. I am just speaking my piece.

ASSEMBLYMAN GENOVA: I move that we adjourn.

MR. FINVER: Mr. Chairman, may I get--

ASSEMBLYMAN GENOVA: No, you may not. This hearing was conducted for property tax deduction testimony, and that's it.

MR. FINVER: Thank you very much.

ASSEMBLYMAN GENOVA: I move that we adjourn.

(HEARING CONCLUDED)







