

**INTERESTED PARTY TESTIMONY OF  
OHIO STATE ASSOCIATION OF COUNTY VETERANS SERVICE OFFICERS  
\*\*\*\*\*SUB. HB 110\*\*\*\*\***

Chairman Dolan, Vice Chairman Gavarone, Member Sykes

My name is Kevan Wain, and I am President of the Ohio State Association of Veterans Service Officers.

I served in the United States Army from 1983 to December 1988. I received Army Commendation Medals, the Army Achievement Medal, the Army of Occupation Medal for service in West Berlin, Germany.

I am also a Member of the National Association of County Veterans Service Officers.

I have been employed as a County Veterans Service Officer for the Columbiana County Veterans Service Commission since 2005.

I have previously served the Ohio State Association of County Veterans Service Officers as the Second Vice-president, and have served as the President of the Association of County Veterans Service Officers since September 2018.

Upon learning of the amendment to O.R.C. Sec. 1533.12 in Sub. HB 110, I had the opportunity to discuss the proposed legislation amending the language regarding eligibility for hunting and fishing license exemption with representatives of the Ohio Department of Natural Resources. We want to expressly thank Senator Frank Hoagland for his service and diligence in the development of the language of the proposed amendment, SC3506.

As I understand the proposed revision of O.R.C. 1533.12 by the Department of Natural Resources in Sub. HB 110, it is based on a suggested correction of the text, which currently refers to those entitled to DEA<sup>1</sup> benefits rather than to veterans who have earned such entitlement for their spouses and children.

Existing law (O.R.C. Sec. 1533.12) grants the ODNR license exemptions to two specific categories of military veterans: Ohio residents (a) who were honorably discharged and who the VA has determined to be 100% Permanently and Totally Disabled and receive pension or compensation, and separately to (b) veterans issued Ohio "Disabled Veteran" license plates. The text of the statute confirms these categories. In conformity, the attached application form for said exemptions lists said categories separately.

Under the proposed amendment, such license exemptions would be granted to Ohio residents (a) who were honorably discharged and who are entitled to DEA benefits [or, as noted earlier, who earned such entitlement for their spouse and children], and separately to

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<sup>1</sup> VA's Survivors' and Dependents' Educational Assistance (Chapter 35 of the United States Code) providing education and training opportunities to eligible dependents and survivors of certain Veterans.

(b) veterans issued Ohio “Disabled Veteran” license plates. The text of the proposed amendment confirms those categories.

Honorable discharge and category (b) are common to both. Accordingly, only the remainders of category (a) of each need be reviewed.

Category (a) of the current law grants license exemptions to Permanently and Totally Disabled veterans who receive compensation for service-connected disabilities. Category (a) of the proposed amended law would grant license exemptions to Permanently and Totally Disabled veterans who receive compensation for service-connected disabilities, with no mention of receipt of pension or compensation, as well as to other categories.

Accordingly, the current law is more restrictive in that it requires receipt of pension or compensation while the proposed amendment does not. (It is hard to imagine a Permanently and Totally Disabled veteran who receives compensation for service-connected disabilities who is not in receipt of pension or compensation, but the secondary “receipt” restriction exists.) The proposed amendment removes said secondary restriction and adds other categories.

In summary, it seems that the intent of the legislative change in Sub. HB 110 is that all veterans currently entitled to the license exemptions and others would be entitled to said exemption under the amendment originally proposed by the Ohio Department of Natural Resources.

The Associations' proposed revision of the amendment as set forth in SC3506 would clarify that the intent of the bill is to expand coverage, by restoring language for permanently and totally disabled veterans receiving a pension or compensation from the Department of Veterans Affairs and insertion of the conjunction, "or", to indicate that both classes of potential recipients would be included by the expanded coverage.

Finally, the amendment proposed by Senator Hoagland also expands the license exemptions to any veteran, including nonresidents. The Ohio State Association of County Veterans Service Officers and the Ohio State Association of Veterans Service Commissioners strongly support this legislation, as it properly recognizes the sacrifice and service of Ohio's veterans.