

House Republican Press Release

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HOUSE REPUBLICANS OFFER VETERANS PENSION RELIEF, TAX BREAKS, FREE PARKS ADMISSION



Support Our Troops Commemorative License Plates Could Offset Costs

HARTFORD - Thousands of Connecticut veterans will receive property tax breaks, pension tax relief and free admission to state parks under proposals offered by House Republican Leader Lawrence F. Cafero Jr., today.

The veteran benefits will also include fee exemptions for colleges for all wartime veterans, Cafero said. Previously House Republicans proposed a dedicated commemorative license plate, "Support Our Troops," that would produce revenue to support active duty programs and organizations.

"We must not lose sight of the commitment and hard work that our men and women in the military have made in our behalf. These proposals are an acknowledgment of their sacrifice and their duty to country," Cafero said.

The Republicans proposed:

- A phase out of the state tax on pensions. Currently Connecticut exempts 50 percent of veterans' pension from state taxes. Our goal has always been to exempt 100 percent of the pensions;
- Increase property tax exemptions for all those who have served during wartime;
- Create a veterans ID card that will provide easy access to services. It would be administered by the state Department of Veterans' Affairs
- Free admission to state parks and forests for anyone with a valid military ID card;
- A waiver of school fees for state colleges. Currently Connecticut offers a tuition waiver for veterans but does not cover various fees.

Cafero said a portion of the costs of the proposals could be offset by the issuance of the commemorative plate. He noted that other plates have thrown off revenue for dedicated funds, including the Save Long Island Sound plate that has produced more than \$4 million for Connecticut.

"If the Support Our Troops plate produces half that much it will have been a success," Cafero said.