

House Republican Press Release

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Rep. Hamzy Testifies in Support of Bill to Allow Unemployment Comp for Military Spouses



Measure Would Ease Hardship on Military Families Caused by Transfers to Out-of-State Bases

When married military personnel are reassigned to out-of-state bases, it can create significant financial hardship for their families, especially when non-military spouses have to give up their local jobs because of the transfer, state Representative

William A. Hamzy, R-78th District, said in testimony this week before a legislative committee in support of a bill that would authorize unemployment compensation for the civilian spouse.

Noting that most Connecticut residents who leave their jobs voluntarily are ineligible for unemployment compensation, Representative Hamzy, who introduced the bill, said some can qualify if the circumstances of their resignations meet the standards for a 'good cause' exception under state law.

"Leaving an occupation because a spouse in the military is transferred should be considered a 'good cause,'" Representative Hamzy said in testimony before the General Assembly's Labor and Public Employees Committee Tuesday (February 20, 2007). "Our soldiers are not allowed to reject transfers as civilians can; nor are they allowed to leave their jobs to avoid a transfer. Because of their sacrifices for our nation, their families should not have to suffer."

"The brave men and women who serve and protect our nation's liberties have many things to worry about. Keeping a military family together is not an easy task, considering problems such as school transfers and separation from family members they have to endure on a regular basis. They should not have to worry about whether they can adequately provide for their families when they are transferred from a base in Connecticut to an out-of-state military facility," Representative Hamzy said.

"Connecticut would not be the first state to allow unemployment benefits for military spouses," Representative Hamzy said. "California, Texas, Florida, Georgia, Pennsylvania, Oklahoma, New York, Washington, North Carolina, and New Mexico are among states with large military presences that allow compensation for military spouses who leave their jobs when their husbands or wives are reassigned out-of-state."

"In the State of Connecticut, there are 3,585 military spouses in the labor force. Slightly less than two percent of them, or about 43 people, would be eligible for the benefits requested in this bill. The maximum weekly aid each individual could receive would be no more than about \$253. The maximum amount of aid this bill would provide would be approximately \$3,500 weekly or about \$150,000 per year," Representative Hamzy said.

"For approximately \$150,000 a year, the State of Connecticut can provide badly needed financial support to the families of the people who provide protection for all of the citizens of the United

States. I hope you will consider this bill and demonstrate to the troops from Connecticut that they are supported and appreciated here at home,” Representative Hamzy told the committee.