

# Vermont House Bill 846-Exemption of Military Retirement Pay from State Tax

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## A selection of Comments from Veterans Supporting Bill 846-Exemption of Military Retirement Pay from State Tax

### Petition Comments

The sacrifices of Veterans could not be measured in dollars. Without their work none of us would have our freedom. Please let's give them this break. Daniel

Support our hard working, always on call, ready to serve their community, state and country. Susan

Retired military folks deserve something in return for putting their lives on the line for state and country. Now is the time to make their retirement pay tax free as it is in many other states. Bruce

The men and women who serve and protect us have already pledged something much more valuable than money the least we can do in return is to not tax their pay. Connie

I served our country and state as a member of the Vermont Army National Guard for 27 years. Though never mobilized for a combat mission, at the time I joined I wrote a check to our country payable up to and including the value of my life. I did however serve many days and nights supporting recovery operations for disasters from train wrecks, floods and ice storms. Dennis

Keep our Vets here! Bring more Vets here! Honest, hard-working, professionals! Exactly the kind of citizens we should retain and attract! Let them spend their retirement money in Vermont!!!

We have so many talented Vermonters who love Vermont but leave (or don't come back) when they retire from the military because of what they will have to pay in taxes. Many of these people continue to work (often in high-paying jobs) while collecting their military benefits and would still be contributing an income tax in that regard. Andrew

Vermont needs to do more to support veterans that have given a lifetime of guarding the freedoms of others. Daniel

Please show great respect of retire military personnel who have dedicated years of service to protect and service our State and Country. Duane

Yes please. My widowed Mother Needs this! Brandy

I am retired Military Veteran with 21 years of honorable service. Afghanistan Combat Veteran as well. I left Vermont in 2015 because I just could not afford to live there. I was born and raised in Addison County and raised my family there as well. I would like to move back HOME but with property taxes the way they are it's almost impossible. This would be a good first step and join many other States in honoring our service and sacrifices. Mark

As a Retired veteran and former Veterans Outreach worker. I saw firsthand how many retired veterans struggled to make ends meet in VT. Many like myself have moved from our homes in VT to

more veteran friendly states. Please consider this bill and show your respect and support for your veterans. Brian

Some gave some, some gave all. Please pass this bill. Signed a native Vermont/Active Duty, twice/Army National Guard Member/Full-time Vermont Military Technician. Catherine

I selflessly served my Country for 30 years. The decision effected my family during my career, I volunteered to serve, they did not. Many special events in their lives took second place to MY commitment, to our Country and State who reaped the benefits of our Freedom. I will never leave Vermont like many of my brothers and sisters in arms must escape the high cost of living and political tomfoolery. I run a Service business that helps Vermonters with the loss of their loved ones, I continue to serve my State and neighbors. Not taxing retired pay provides additional disposable income that I put back into my community and State by supporting local businesses and my State. The income I earn through my business is taxed along with all the other taxes I pay and will continue to pay. It's that simple. Matt

With over 40 years of service in the US Army and Vermont Army National Guard, I believe this bill is long overdue. States that have recognized the value-added of exempting retired military pay from taxes have seen an increase in the number of retirees re-locating to their state. They bring a reliable monthly income, are not a burden on the healthcare or social services, have disposable income they spend in their local communities and generally increase the quality of life in those communities through their continued selfless service. At a time of negative population growth and loss of income due to the re-location of many retirees seeking relief from the burden of high taxes, exempting military retirement from state taxes will attract a highly desirable segment of retiree society to Vermont. The homes, cars, food, clothes, and services they buy will fuel the state's economy and return a vibrancy that has moved away in recent years. This is a sound fiscal decision which will significantly enrich the tax coffers of the great State of Vermont. I strongly urge enactment of H. 435! Mike

I have lived in VT my entire life (minus joining the Army Active Duty and deployment to Afghanistan while a National Guardsmen) and have been retired for 4 1/2 years. With taxes and the cost of living rising, some months can be difficult ~ just a little help from the State we love and Defended would be gratefully appreciated! Karen

### **Survey Comments**

I moved to North Carolina to get away from hard winters and to be close to my grandkids. I found that they had a veteran tax exemption which I qualified for based on time of service. NC also does not tax social security income. I still follow VT news and watch progressive destruction of the State. Keep fighting! Brian

I worked at the State House two years ago when a similar bill was being discussed. One major argument then was that we military retirees make too much money (in addition to pension) so we don't need any tax breaks! Bill

Guardsmen and reservists do not make to much money and in many cases could use the break. Put a dollar amount on it. The first 30,000 or 25,000 like NY. That would really help the ones who need it. Brian

I agree, with putting a ceiling on it. I was a weekend warrior, earn a small retirement benefit. I have a municipal retirement after working 35 years, in Law Enforcement. Both are taxed, both are very limited. Local property taxes, supported by tax exempt, and those in subsidies housing, vote approval of any concerns. And now they want undocumented to be allowed to vote? My taxes support more

government, more free housing, more social services than ever before. I would be happy with a percentage to start with cut, as a pilot program! To start with... Thomas

Robert, i am a grey area military (29 years plus) still living in Vermont. I am very interested in learning the results of your survey as I am running for State Representative from Underhill/Jericho in this next year. The tax on military retirement is one of my number one items to be talking about. My current job does not allow me to testify at the capital for anything other than my job but i am there on a regular basis. Dwight

For my own part, I still consider myself a Vermonter who lives on the other side of the river, but I live in NH because, post-retirement, I worked in NH for Dartmouth College and my salary was nontaxable, so I moved here in 2007. That would further inform the issue. The pension issue wasn't the main reason I moved, but it was related, and it was a collateral benefit that my pension was not taxable. In a year or so, we are becoming FL residents simply because we're tired of the cold. Guessing that may be a driving factor for many. David

Thanks for doing this. Lin and I have many fiends (Guard) and family that tease all the time for us to move. We have been in this house for 46 years and just don't have the ability to get it cleaned and sold and look for another place. The cost of living is killing us slowly each year. A 1.6% raise in SS and retirement is wiped out each year by the increases in medicine, food, taxes and most everything else. It's always a challenge to figure out what we'll cut out of the budget to meet all the increases... getting old in Vermont sucks! The new state motor vehicle (rip off) inspection costs us each year... this year over a thousand dollars for what I consider bullshit. We had to have a new oil tank this year because of the state's inspection rule... it cost 2000.00 dollars; we got a 250-dollar rebate! At this point we will not be able to survive too many more years. Allan

Vermont continues to distinguish itself as having one of the highest rates of per capita military service. Unfortunately, Vermont is also notable for being one of only eight states that fully taxes military retirement pay. Due to this tax, many of those I served with immediately left Vermont after meeting their military retirement requirements, or they did not return after having served on active duty elsewhere. Most military retirees continue to work in civilian occupations after leaving the armed forces. Considering that Vermont is currently facing a significant population and workforce shortage, it is doubly unfortunate that our state is not doing what it can to incentivize our military community to remain here.

With major military installations existing around the Northeast, Vermont has an opportunity to attract a diverse community of military retirees who would move here to live and work in our local communities. These veterans would bring with them desperately needed professional skills, like the emergency services backgrounds Vermont's leaders have identified as lacking in our rural towns. Additionally, the relatively low revenue gained by this tax would almost certainly be offset by the influx of military retirees who would pay other state taxes, while contributing to Vermont as valuable community members.

Please consider the overwhelming benefit of retaining and attracting military retirees to Vermont - Support H.435! Linda

Hated leaving my home state, but taxes drove me out. My military retirement and my social security are not taxable. 100% VA disability so no property tax on a 3-bedroom house, but still miss Vermont. Steve

I love and live in Vermont. If my children and grandchildren and great grandchild did not live here, I would move tomorrow. Veterans have served this state and country with honor for many years of their lives. Veterans should receive relief from taxes on their retired pay. Chuck

We have enjoyed our home in Vermont for many years but as time goes on, it is becoming more difficult to remain in Vermont because of the financial burdens we endure year after year. We have seriously considered moving to Alaska because of the many benefits that it offers to veterans and the cost of living based on our research, would be less than Vermont. Robert

My wife and I have considered moving out of Vermont due to the high taxes here in the state. Don

As soon as I am able, will move to TN, which does not tax our retirements. Being a gs-06, I don't have much to live on as a retiree. It is a shame that I worked full time and can't get enough retirement to live on now. Cathy

Military retirees are not, for the most part, wealthy people. Yet, they and their families have sacrificed a lot for their state and country. This is one small way to pay them back. Edwin

I have found that in my situation changing my residence to FL is currently a wash for me financially as long as I plan to maintain a traditional type home in VT. My wife and I have maintained residence in VT for one reason and that is to vote in VT. There is a time coming in the future when it will be a financial BONUS to change my residence to FL and I likely will even though my home in St Albans would then become a 2nd home and my skyrocketing taxes would skyrocket even more. This exemption would go a long way to tip the scale back to VT. Art

I retired Nov 2015 from VT Air Guard active duty status and I will be moving in June 2021 when my husband retires from VT Air Guard. Being both military retirees we cannot afford to live in VT. We would consider staying in VT if legislators would pass the tax exemption of military retirement Trudy

Vermont's neighboring states either do not have an income tax at all or already exempt military retirement pay. Why has Vermont not stepped up and offered this exemption to its resident veterans? I am somewhat confused why Vermont offers young people a monetary incentive to move to Vermont and work remotely, however, still continues to impose income tax on its veteran's retirement pay. Having an exemption on military retirement pay may have a positive effect on retirees remaining in Vermont and could encourage some to come home to Vermont or immigrate to Vermont. Mike