

SENATE MILITARY AND VETERANS' AFFAIRS
COMMITTEE

STATEMENT TO

SENATE, No. 683

with committee amendments

STATE OF NEW JERSEY

DATED: MARCH 13, 2023

The Senate Military and Veterans Affairs Committee reports favorably and with committee amendments Senate Bill No. 683.

As amended, this bill provides free admission for veterans on the date that the State may designate for the celebration of Memorial Day, Armed Forces Day, Independence Day, Patriot Day, and Veterans Day to:

- 1) State parks and forests, which also includes State owned or leased historic sites;
- 2) historic properties acquired or preserved by a local government unit or qualifying tax exempt nonprofit organization by using State funding; and
- 3) any historic site owned or operated by a county or a municipality.

The bill defines “veteran” as any resident of the State who has been discharged or released under conditions other than dishonorable from active military service in any of the Armed Forces of the United States, or a Reserve component thereof, or any member of the American Merchant Marine discharged or released under conditions other than dishonorable who served during World War II and is declared by the United States Department of Defense to be eligible for federal veterans' benefits.

This bill was pre-filed for introduction in the 2022-2023 session pending technical review. As reported, the bill includes the changes required by technical review, which has been performed.

COMMITTEE AMENDMENTS

The committee amended the bill to change honorable discharge and released under honorable circumstances discharge to “discharged or released under conditions other than dishonorable.” The change will provide more veterans with free admission to State parks and forests, and certain historic sites and properties.

The amendments also add Memorial Day, Armed Forces Day, Independence Day, and Patriot Day, September 11th, to the list of days for free admission to State parks and forests and certain historic sites and historic properties for certain veterans.