ASSEMBLY, No. 4231

STATE OF NEW JERSEY

217th LEGISLATURE

INTRODUCED OCTOBER 7, 2016

Sponsored by:
Assemblyman SEAN T. KEAN
District 30 (Monmouth and Ocean)
Assemblywoman BETTYLOU DECROCE
District 26 (Essex, Morris and Passaic)

SYNOPSIS

Extends eligibility for veterans' property tax deduction and veterans' property tax exemption to residents of continuing care retirement communities.

CURRENT VERSION OF TEXT

As introduced.



(Sponsorship Updated As Of: 10/28/2016)

AN ACT concerning certain veterans' real property tax exemptions and deductions and amending P.L.1971, C.398, P.L.1948, c.259 and P.L.1963, c.171.

BE IT ENACTED by the Senate and General Assembly of the State of New Jersey:

- 1. Section 1 of P.L.1963, c.171 (C.54:4-8.10) is amended to read as follows:
- 1. (a) "Active service in time of war" means active service at some time during one of the following periods:

Operation "Iraqi Freedom", on or after the date the President of the United States or the United States Secretary of Defense designates as the inception date of that operation, who served in Iraq or in another area in the region in direct support of that operation for a period, continuously or in the aggregate, of at least 14 days in such active service commencing on or before the date the President of the United States or the United States Secretary of Defense designates as the termination date of that operation; provided, that any person receiving an actual service-incurred injury or disability while engaged in such service shall be classed as a veteran whether or not that person has completed the 14 days' service as herein provided;

Operation "Enduring Freedom", on or after September 11, 2001, who served in a theater of operation and in direct support of that operation for a period, continuously or in the aggregate, of at least 14 days in such active service commencing on or before the date the President of the United States or the United States Secretary of Defense designates as the termination date of that operation; provided, that any person receiving an actual service-incurred injury or disability while engaged in such service shall be classed as a veteran whether or not that person has completed the 14 days' service as herein provided;

Operation "Restore Hope" in Somalia, on or after December 5, 1992, or the date of inception of that operation as proclaimed by the President of the United States or Congress, whichever date is earliest, who has served in Somalia or on board any ship actively engaged in patrolling the territorial waters of that nation for a period, continuously or in the aggregate, of at least 14 days in such active service commencing on or before March 31, 1994; provided that any person receiving an actual service-incurred injury or disability shall be classed as a veteran whether or not that person has completed the 14-day service as herein provided;

Operations "Joint Endeavor" and "Joint Guard" in the Republic of Bosnia and Herzegovina, on or after November 20, 1995, who

EXPLANATION – Matter enclosed in bold-faced brackets [thus] in the above bill is not enacted and is intended to be omitted in the law.

served in such active service in direct support of one or both of the operations for at least 14 days, continuously or in the aggregate, commencing on or before June 20, 1998, and (1) was deployed in that nation or in another area in the region, or (2) was on board a United States naval vessel operating in the Adriatic Sea, or (3) operated in airspace above the Republic of Bosnia and Herzegovina; provided that any person receiving an actual service-incurred injury or disability shall be classed as a veteran whether or not that person completed the 14-day service requirement;

Operation Northern Watch and Operation Southern Watch, on or after August 27, 1992, or the date of inception of that operation, as proclaimed by the President of the United States, Congress or United States Secretary of Defense, whichever date of inception is earliest, who served in the theater of operation, including in the Arabian peninsula and the Persian Gulf, and in direct support of that operation for a period, continuously or in the aggregate, of at least 14 days in such active service, commencing on or before the date of termination as proclaimed by the President of the United States, Congress or United States Secretary of Defense, whichever date of termination is the latest; provided, that any person receiving an actual service-incurred injury or disability while engaged in such service shall be classed as a veteran whether or not that person has completed the 14 days' service as herein provided;

Operation "Desert Shield/Desert Storm" mission in the Arabian peninsula and the Persian Gulf, on or after August 2, 1990 or the date of inception of that operation, as proclaimed by the President of the United States or Congress, whichever date of inception is earliest, who has served in the Arabian peninsula or on board any ship actively engaged in patrolling the Persian Gulf for a period, continuous or in the aggregate, of at least 14 days commencing on or before the date of termination of that mission, as proclaimed by the President of the United States or Congress, whichever date of termination is the latest, in such active service; provided, that any person receiving an actual service-incurred injury or disability shall be classed as a veteran whether or not that person has completed the 14 days' service as herein provided;

The Panama peacekeeping mission, on or after December 20, 1989 or the date of inception of that mission, as proclaimed by the President of the United States or Congress, whichever date of inception is earliest, who has served in Panama or on board any ship actively engaged in patrolling the territorial waters of that nation for a period, continuous or in the aggregate, of at least 14 days commencing on or before January 31, 1990 or the date of termination of that mission, as proclaimed by the President of the United States or Congress, whichever date of termination is the latest, in such active service; provided, that any person receiving an actual service-incurred injury or disability shall be classed as a veteran whether or not that person has completed the 14 days'

1 service as herein provided;

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2 The Grenada peacekeeping mission, on or after October 23, 3 1983, who has served in Grenada or on board any ship actively engaged in patrolling the territorial waters of that nation for a 4 5 period, continuous or in the aggregate, of at least 14 days commencing on or before November 21, 1983 or the date of 6 7 termination of that mission as proclaimed by the President of the United States or Congress, whichever date of termination is the 9 latest, in such active service; provided, that any person receiving an 10 actual service-incurred injury or disability shall be classed as a veteran whether or not that person has completed the 14 days' 11 12 service as herein provided;

The Lebanon peacekeeping mission, on or after September 26, 1982, who has served in Lebanon or on board any ship actively engaged in patrolling the territorial waters of that nation for a period, continuous or in the aggregate, of at least 14 days commencing on or before December 1, 1987 or the date of termination of that mission, as proclaimed by the President of the United States or Congress, whichever date of termination is the latest, in such active service; provided, that any person receiving an actual service-incurred injury or disability shall be classed as a veteran whether or not that person has completed the 14 days' service as herein provided;

The Vietnam conflict, December 31, 1960, to May 7, 1975;

The Lebanon crisis, on or after July 1, 1958, who has served in Lebanon or on board any ship actively engaged in patrolling the territorial waters of that nation for a period, continuous or in the aggregate, of at least 14 days commencing on or before November 1, 1958 or the date of termination of that conflict, as proclaimed by the President of the United States or Congress, whichever date of termination is the latest, in such active service; provided, that any person receiving an actual service-incurred injury or disability shall be classed as a veteran whether or not that person has completed the 14 days' service as herein provided;

- 35 The Korean conflict, June 23, 1950 to January 31, 1955;
- 36 World War II, September 16, 1940 to December 31, 1946;
- 37 World War I, April 6, 1917 to November 11, 1918, and in the 38 case of service with the United States military forces in Russia, 39 April 6, 1917 to April 1, 1920;
- 40 Spanish-American War, April 21, 1898 to August 13, 1898;
- 41 Civil War, April 15, 1861 to May 26, 1865; or, as to any 42 subsequent war, during the period from the date of declaration of 43 war to the date on which actual hostilities shall cease.
 - (b) "Assessor" means the assessor, board of assessors or any other official or body of a taxing district charged with the duty of assessing real and personal property for the purpose of general taxation.
- 48 (c) "Collector" means the collector or receiver of taxes of a

taxing district.

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- 2 (d) "Honorably discharged or released under honorable 3 circumstances from active service in time of war," means and includes every form of separation from active, full-time duty with 4 5 military or naval pay and allowances in some branch of the Armed Forces of the United States in time of war, other than those marked 6 7 "dishonorable," "undesirable," "bad conduct," "by sentence of 8 general court martial," "by sentence of summary court martial" or 9 similar expression indicating that the discharge or release was not 10 under honorable circumstances. A disenrollment certificate or other form of release terminating temporary service in a military or naval 11 12 branch of the armed forces rendered on a voluntary and part-time 13 basis without pay, or a release from or deferment of induction into 14 the active military or naval service shall not be deemed to be included in the aforementioned phrase. 15
 - (e) "Pre-tax year" means the particular calendar year immediately preceding the "tax year."
 - (f) "Resident" means one legally domiciled within the State of New Jersey. Mere seasonal or temporary residence within the State, of whatever duration, shall not constitute domicile within the State for the purposes of this act. Absence from this State for a period of 12 months shall be prima facie evidence of abandonment of domicile in this State. The burden of establishing legal domicile within the State shall be upon the claimant.
 - (g) "Tax year" means the particular calendar year in which the general property tax is due and payable.
 - (h) "Veteran" means any citizen and resident of this State honorably discharged or released under honorable circumstances from active service in time of war in any branch of the Armed Forces of the United States.
 - (i) "Veteran's deduction" means the deduction against the taxes payable by any person, allowable pursuant to this act.
 - (j) "Surviving spouse" means the surviving wife or husband of any of the following, while he or she is a resident of this State, during widowhood or widowerhood:
 - 1. A citizen and resident of this State who has died or shall die while on active duty in time of war in any branch of the Armed Forces of the United States; or
- 2. A citizen and resident of this State who has had or shall hereafter have active service in time of war in any branch of the Armed Forces of the United States and who died or shall die while on active duty in a branch of the Armed Forces of the United States; or
 - 3. A citizen and resident of this State who has been or may hereafter be honorably discharged or released under honorable circumstances from active service in time of war in any branch of the Armed Forces of the United States.
- 48 (k) "Cooperative" means a housing corporation or association

incorporated or organized under the laws of New Jersey which entitles a shareholder thereof to possess and occupy for dwelling purposes a house, apartment or other structure owned or leased by the corporation or association.

- (1) "Mutual housing corporation" means a corporation not-forprofit incorporated under the laws of New Jersey on a mutual or cooperative basis within the scope of section 607 of the "National Defense Housing Act," Pub.L.76-849 (42 U.S.C.s.1521 et seq.), which acquired a National Defense Housing Project pursuant to that act.
- 11 (m) "Continuing care retirement community" means a residential 12 facility primarily for retired persons where lodging and nursing, 13 medical or other health related services at the same or another 14 location are provided as continuing care to a resident of the facility 15 pursuant to an agreement effective for the life of the resident and in 16 consideration of the payment of an entrance fee with or without 17 other periodic charges, which agreement requires the individual to 18 bear a share of the property taxes that are assessed upon the 19 continuing care retirement community, if a share is attributable to 20 the unit that the resident occupies.
 - (cf: P.L.2005, c.64, s.5)

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- 2. Section 2 of P.L.1963, c.171 (C:54:4-8.11) is amended to read as follows:
- 2. Every person a citizen and resident of this State now or hereafter honorably discharged or released under honorable circumstances from active service in time of war in any branch of the Armed Forces of the United States and a surviving spouse as defined herein, during her widowhood or his widowerhood, and while a resident of this State, shall be entitled, annually, on proper claim being made therefor, to a deduction from the amount of any tax bill for taxes on real or personal property or both in the sum of \$100 in tax year 2000, \$150 in tax year 2001, \$200 in tax year 2002, and \$250 in each subsequent tax year, or if the amount of any such tax shall be less than \$100 in tax year 2000, \$150 in tax year 2001, \$200 in tax year 2002, and \$250 in each subsequent tax year, to a cancellation thereof. A person otherwise eligible for the veterans' deduction who is a resident of a continuing care retirement community shall be entitled to claim the deduction to the extent of the share of the taxes assessed against the real property of the continuing care retirement community that is attributable to the
- 43 (cf: P.L.2000, c.9, s.1)

unit that the resident occupies.

- 45 3. Section 6 of P.L.1963, c.171 (C.54:4-8.15) is amended to 46 read as follows:
- 6. Every fact essential to support a claim for a veteran's deduction hereunder shall exist on October 1 of the pretax year and

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1 in the case of an application by a veteran such application shall 2 establish that the claimant was, on October 1 of the pretax year, (a) 3 a veteran, as herein defined, (b) the owner of the legal title to the property as to which the veteran's deduction is claimed and (c) a 4 5 citizen and resident of this State and, in the case of an application by a surviving spouse, as herein defined, such application shall 6 7 establish that the surviving spouse was, on October 1 of the pretax 8 year, (a) the owner of the legal title to the property as to which the 9 veteran's deduction is claimed, (b) that he or she has not remarried 10 and (c) that he or she is a resident of this State. For purposes of 11 establishing a claim, a tenant shareholder in a cooperative or a 12 mutual housing corporation shall be deemed the owner of legal title 13 to his proportionate share of the taxable value of the real property 14 of the corporation or any other entity holding title. For the purpose 15 of establishing a claim, a resident of a continuing care retirement 16 community shall be deemed the owner of legal title to the share of 17 the taxable value of the real property of the continuing care 18 retirement community that is attributable to the unit that the 19 resident occupies.

(cf: P.L.1989, c.252, s.6)

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4. Section 9 of P.L.1963, c.171 (C.54:4-8.18) is amended to read as follows:

9. Where title to property as to which a veteran's deduction is claimed is held by claimant and another or others, either as tenants in common or as joint tenants, a claimant shall not be allowed a veteran's deduction in an amount in excess of his or her proportionate share of the taxes assessed against said property, which proportionate share, for the purposes of this act, shall be deemed to be equal to that of each of the other tenants, unless the conveyance under which title is held specifically provides unequal interests, in which event claimant's interest shall be as specifically established in said conveyance. Property held by husband and wife, as tenants by the entirety, shall be deemed to be wholly owned by each tenant. Nothing herein shall preclude more than one tenant, whether title be held in common, joint tenancy or by the entirety, from claiming a veteran's deduction from the tax assessed against the property so held. Right to claim a veteran's deduction hereunder shall extend to property title to which is held by a partnership, to the extent of the claimant's interest as a partner therein, and by a guardian, trustee, committee, conservator or other fiduciary for any person who would otherwise be entitled to claim a veteran's deduction hereunder, but not to property the title to which is held by a corporation, except that a tenant shareholder in a cooperative or mutual housing corporation shall be entitled to claim a veteran's deduction to the extent of his proportionate share of the taxes assessed against the real property of the corporation or any other entity holding title, and except that a resident of a continuing

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care retirement community shall be entitled to claim a veterans'

deduction to the extent of the share of the taxes assessed against the

real property of the continuing care retirement community that is

attributable to the unit that the resident occupies.

(cf: P.L.1989, c.252, s.7)

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5. Section 1 of P.L.1948, c.259 (C.54:4-3.30) is amended to read as follows:

1. a. The dwelling house and the lot or curtilage whereon the same is erected, of any citizen and resident of this State, now or hereafter honorably discharged or released under honorable circumstances, from active service, in time of war, in any branch of the Armed Forces of the United States, who has been or shall be declared by the United States Veterans Administration or its successor to have a service-connected disability from paraplegia, sarcoidosis, osteochondritis resulting in permanent loss of the use of both legs, or permanent paralysis of both legs and lower parts of the body, or from hemiplegia and has permanent paralysis of one leg and one arm or either side of the body, resulting from injury to the spinal cord, skeletal structure, or brain or from disease of the spinal cord not resulting from any form of syphilis; or from total blindness; or from amputation of both arms or both legs, or both hands or both feet, or the combination of a hand and a foot; or from other service-connected disability declared by the United States Veterans Administration or its successor to be a total or 100% permanent disability, and not so evaluated solely because of hospitalization or surgery and recuperation, sustained through enemy action, or accident, or resulting from disease contracted while in such active service, shall be exempt from taxation, on proper claim made therefor, and such exemption shall be in addition to any other exemption of such person's real and personal property which now is or hereafter shall be prescribed or allowed by the Constitution or by law but no taxpayer shall be allowed more than one exemption under this act.

A person otherwise eligible for the exemption who is a resident of a continuing care retirement community shall be entitled to claim the exemption to the extent of the share of the taxes assessed against the real property of the continuing care retirement community that is attributable to the unit that the resident occupies.

b. (1) The surviving spouse of any such citizen and resident of this State, who at the time of death was entitled to the exemption provided under this act, shall be entitled, on proper claim made therefor, to the same exemption as the deceased had, during the surviving spouse's widowhood or widowerhood, as the case may be, and while a resident of this State, for the time that the surviving spouse is the legal owner thereof and actually occupies the said dwelling house or any other dwelling house thereafter acquired. A surviving spouse otherwise entitled to the exemption who is a

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resident of a continuing care retirement community shall be entitled to claim the exemption to the extent of the share of the taxes assessed against the real property of the continuing care retirement community that is attributable to the unit that the surviving spouse occupies.

- (2) The surviving spouse of any citizen and resident of this State who was honorably discharged and, after the citizen and resident's death, is declared to have suffered a service-connected disability as provided in subsection a. of this section, shall be entitled, on proper claim made therefor, to the same exemption the deceased would have become eligible for. The exemption shall continue during the surviving spouse's widowhood or widowerhood, as the case may be, and while a resident of this State, for the time that the surviving spouse is the legal owner thereof and actually occupies the dwelling house or any other dwelling house thereafter acquired. A surviving spouse otherwise entitled to the exemption who is a resident of a continuing care retirement community shall be entitled to claim the exemption to the extent of the share of the taxes assessed against the real property of the continuing care retirement community that is attributable to the unit that the surviving spouse occupies.
- c. The surviving spouse of any citizen and resident of this State, who died in active service in time of war in any branch of the Armed Forces of the United States, shall be entitled, on proper claim made therefor, to an exemption from taxation on the dwelling house and lot or curtilage whereon the same is erected, during the surviving spouse's widowhood or widowerhood, as the case may be, and while a resident of this State, for the time that the surviving spouse is the legal owner thereof and actually occupies the said dwelling or any other dwelling house thereafter acquired. A surviving spouse otherwise entitled to the exemption who is a resident of a continuing care retirement community shall be entitled to claim the exemption to the extent of the share of the taxes assessed against the real property of the continuing care retirement community that is attributable to the unit that the surviving spouse occupies.
- d. The surviving spouse of any citizen and resident of this State who died prior to January 10, 1972, that being the effective date of P.L.1971, c.398, and whose circumstances were such that, had said law become effective during the deceased's lifetime, the deceased would have become eligible for the exemption granted under this section as amended by said law, shall be entitled, on proper claim made therefor, to the same exemption as the deceased would have become eligible for upon the dwelling house and lot or curtilage occupied by the deceased at the time of death, during the surviving spouse's widowhood or widowerhood, as the case may be, and while a resident of this State, for the time that the surviving spouse is the legal owner thereof and actually occupies the said dwelling house on the premises to be exempted. A surviving spouse

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otherwise entitled to the exemption who is a resident of a continuing care retirement community shall be entitled to claim the exemption to the extent of the share of the taxes assessed against the real property of the continuing care retirement community that is attributable to the unit that the surviving spouse occupies.

e. Nothing in this act shall be intended to include paraplegia or hemiplegia resulting from locomotor ataxia or other forms of syphilis of the central nervous system, or from chronic alcoholism, or to include other forms of disease resulting from the veteran's own misconduct which may produce signs and symptoms similar to those resulting from paraplegia, osteochondritis, or hemiplegia.

12 (cf: P.L.2007, c.317, s.1)

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6. Section 2 of P.L.1948, c.259 (C.54:4-3.31) is amended to read as follows:

2. All exemptions from taxation under P.L.1948, c.259 (C.54:4-3.30 et seq.) shall be allowed by the assessor upon the filing with him of a claim in writing under oath, made by or on behalf of the person claiming the same, showing the right to the exemption, briefly describing the property for which exemption is claimed and having annexed thereto a certificate of the claimant's honorable discharge or release under honorable circumstances, from active service, in time of war, in any branch of the armed forces and a certificate from the United States Veterans Administration or its successor, certifying to a service-connected disability of such claimant of the character described in section 1 of P.L.1948, c.259 (C.54:4-3.30). In the case of a claim by a surviving spouse of such veteran, the claimant shall establish in writing under oath that the claimant is the owner of the legal title to the premises on which exemption is claimed; that the claimant occupies the dwelling house on said premises as the claimant's legal residence in this State; that the veteran shall have been declared, either during the veteran's lifetime or after the veteran's death, by the United States Veterans Administration to have or to have had a service-connected disability of a character described in this act, or, in the case of a claim for an exemption under subsection c. of section 1 of P.L.1948, c.259 (C.54:4-3.30), that the veteran shall have been declared to have died in active service in time of war; that the veteran was entitled to an exemption provided for in this act, except for an exemption under paragraph (2) of subsection b. and subsection c. of section 1 hereof, at the time of death; and that the claimant is a resident of this State and has not remarried. Such exemptions shall be allowed and prorated by the assessor for the remainder of any taxable year from the date the claimant shall have acquired title to the real property intended to be exempt by this act. Where a portion of a multiplefamily building or structure occupied by the claimant is the subject of such exemption, the assessor shall aggregate the assessment on the lot or curtilage and building or structure and allow an exemption

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of that percentage of the aggregate assessment as the value of the portion of the building or structure occupied by the claimant bears to the value of the entire building or structure.

For the purpose of establishing a claim, a resident of a continuing care retirement community shall be deemed the owner of legal title to the share of the taxable value of the real property of the continuing care retirement community that is attributable to the unit that the resident occupies.

(cf: P.L.2007, c.317, s.2)

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- 11 7. Section 4 of P.L.1948, c.259 (C.54:4-3.33) is amended to 12 read as follows:
- 13 4. Dwelling house," as used in [this act] P.L.1948, c.259 14 (C.54:4-3.30 et al.), shall mean any one-family building or structure 15 or any unit of a horizontal property regime established pursuant to 16 the "Horizontal Property Act," P.L.1963, c.168 (C.46:8A-1 et seq.) 17 or any unit of a condominium property established pursuant to the 18 "Condominium Act," P.L.1969, c.257 (C.46:8B-1 et seq.) owned 19 and occupied by a claimant as his legal residence in this State, or a 20 unit in a continuing care retirement community occupied by a 21 claimant as his legal residence in this State, or where a multiple-22 family building or structure is owned by a claimant, then that 23 portion thereof which is occupied by the claimant as his legal 24 residence in this State, and includes any outhouses or appurtenances 25 belonging thereto or usually enjoyed therewith.

26 (cf: P.L.1977, c.293, s.1)

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- 28 8. Section 2 of P.L.1971, c.398 (C.54:4-3.33a) is amended to 29 read as follows:
- 2. For the purposes of **[**this act**]** <u>P.L.1971, c.398</u> and **[**the act hereby amended and supplemented**]** <u>P.L.1948, c.259 (C.54:4-3.30 et al.):</u>
 - "active service in time of war" means the periods of time set forth in section 1(a) of chapter 171 of the laws of 1963, and chapter 165 of the laws of 1965, except that "active service in time of war" for World War II means active service at some time during December 7, 1941 to December 31, 1946, and
- "continuing care retirement community" means a residential
 facility primarily for retired persons where lodging and nursing,
 medical, or other health related services at the same or another
- 41 location are provided as continuing care to a resident of the facility
- 42 pursuant to an agreement effective for the life of the resident and in
- 43 consideration of the payment of an entrance fee with or without
- other periodic charges, which agreement requires the individual to
- bear a share of the property taxes that are assessed upon the
- 46 continuing care retirement community, if a share is attributable to
- 47 <u>the unit that the resident occupies</u>.
- 48 (cf: P.L.1971, c.398, s.2)

9. This act shall take effect immediately, but shall remain inoperative until the approval by the voters of a constitutional amendment authorizing veterans, honorably discharged or released under honorable circumstances from active service in time of war, who are residents of continuing care retirement communities, and their surviving spouses, to receive the veterans' property tax deduction or total property tax exemption, as appropriate, provided for in this act.

STATEMENT

This bill would extend the \$250 property tax deduction, and the total property tax exemption, now granted to honorably discharged veterans and their surviving spouses on the homes that they own, to residential units in continuing care retirement communities. Veterans, and their surviving spouses, who reside in continuing care retirement communities do not qualify for the \$250 property tax deduction or the total property tax exemption because these veterans do not own the units in which they reside.

The bill will not become operative until the approval by the voters of a constitutional amendment authorizing veterans honorably discharged or released under honorable circumstances from active service in time of war who are residents of continuing care retirement communities and their surviving spouses to receive the veterans' property tax deduction and the veterans' total property tax exemption.