

MEMORANDUM

TO: All Senators

FROM: Senator Christine Tartaglione

DATE:

SUBJECT: Disabled Veterans Real Estate Tax

In the near future, I plan to re-introduce legislation that amends the Disabled Veterans Real Estate Tax Exemption law relating to calculation of income and the determination of “need.” This legislation was previously introduced as SB 156 in the 2017-18 session.

It is not uncommon for constituents to voice their concerns about the rising cost of property taxes. However, this financial burden is also felt by our disabled veterans who are unable to work due to injuries incurred while serving in the military. Many of these disabled veterans live on fixed incomes that are being outpaced by the increases in their property tax bills.

This legislation would amend the law by adding a definition of “income” that mirrors the definition in the Senior Citizen Property Tax and Rent Rebate Act. Under current regulations for the Disabled Veterans Real Estate Tax Exemption program, “income” is defined as all income, including 100% of social security income and railroad retirement benefits. This bill would exempt 50% of social security income and railroad retirement benefits and be consistent with the Senior Citizens Property Tax and Rent Rebate Act. This change will potentially increase eligibility for the tax exemption among the disabled veteran population.

In addition, this legislation will remove the language that creates a “rebuttable presumption” of need if the applicant makes less than \$75,000 annually and provides that applicants with less than \$75,000 in annual income shall be deemed to be in need and receive the exemption. The rebuttable presumption contained in current law will continue to apply to those making over \$75,000 per year.

This legislation is aimed at providing property tax exemption to an expanded population of veterans who have incurred significant and permanent disability as a result of their military service, and now suffer from financial hardship. Please join me in cosponsoring this legislation and help give financial relief to those who honorably served our country.

Members who co-sponsored this legislation previously include Senators Costa, Brewster, Sabatina, Rafferty, Leach, Greenleaf, Reschenthaler, Fontana, Stefano, Blake, and Boscola.