



VETERANS OF FOREIGN WARS DEPARTMENT OF ILLINOIS LEGISLATIVE COMMITTEE

23 July 2023

Letter to Daily Herald

It was with great interest that I read Mr. Giffin's article published 23 July on real estate tax breaks received by some Illinois veterans. We at the Veterans of Foreign Wars have certainly reviewed the report conducted by the Illinois Department of Revenue and it is our opinion that it is flawed in many respects.

Some of the counties that seem to be highlighted have military installations which contribute millions if not billions of dollars to communities within these counties in the form of jobs held by local citizens and goods and services purchased by the facility and their military employees. Many military retirees reside close to these installations for a variety of reasons, not the least of which is proximity to medical care facilities. They spend their money, including retirement pensions, locally in these counties which in turn are multiplied at least four fold.

Veterans who receive the homestead exemptions, not so subtly attacked in the report, do so as a result of injuries incurred while on active duty in defense of our country. To qualify for an exemption, a disability, and the veteran's percentage of loss, must be certified by the Veterans Administration. The disability compensation they receive from the exemption allows many veterans and their surviving unremarried spouses to retain their residence which many cannot afford without this exemption.

There are many other groups that receive exemptions yet the veterans community was singled out, perhaps because they are such a small part of our population (less than 1%). As one example, I can't imagine anyone would dare to request a report on senior citizen exemptions and their impact on property tax receipts..

I was glad to see Rep. Kifowit quoted one of many of our legislators who have worked tirelessly to support bills that that help veterans and some Superintendents of the local Veteran Assistance Commissions that help so many veterans in need.

Again, we must highlight the fact that many severely handicapped veterans are being singled out for criticism in the report. This attack on the very small percentage of Illinois citizens who answered the call is unacceptable.

Also please retract you claim that the \$2,500 & \$5,000 amount is deducted from taxes it is off the assessed value.

John "Dutch" DeGroot

Legislative Chairman

NO ONE DOES MORE FOR VETERANS.
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