

SENATE MILITARY AND VETERANS' AFFAIRS  
COMMITTEE

STATEMENT TO

SENATE, No. 3833

**STATE OF NEW JERSEY**

DATED: NOVEMBER 18, 2019

The Senate Military and Veterans Affairs Committee reports favorably Senate Bill No. 3833.

This bill establishes a uniform standard for acceptable proof of veteran status for veteran identification cards and various State and local programs.

N.J.S.A.40A:9-78.2 establishes a county veterans ID card program for the sole purpose of identifying the holder as a veteran when such identification is required to receive discounts or other courtesies extended to military veterans. In 2015, the federal government enacted the “Veterans Identification Card Act of 2015,” which created an additional veterans’ identification card. These two identification cards were created to allow veterans to prove their Armed Forces service without having to carry around their DD-214 form or other sensitive documents.

The creation of these additional veterans’ identification cards has led to different standards of proof across State and local agencies and programs designed to benefit veterans. In addition, several State and local agencies do not accept certain forms of proof for reservists of the Armed Forces whose active duty was limited to reserve-connected active training or service, such as a DD-256 form. This bill streamlines the disparate list of documents acceptable to various State and local agencies to demonstrate uniformed service for veterans.

This bill also re-defines the “character of service” benchmark that veterans must reach to qualify for various State and local programs. To qualify for benefits afforded veterans under the laws of this State, a veteran is required to be released from service under honorable or general honorable conditions. This removes the previous benchmark of being released under conditions other than dishonorable, which included “bad conduct” and “other than honorable conditions” releases.