

Real Estate Tax Relief for 100% Disabled Veterans FAQs

On November 2, 2010, voters will be asked to vote on a proposed amendment to the Virginia Constitution to provide real estate tax relief for 100% service-connected disabled veterans and their surviving spouses. If approved, local governments would grant real estate tax exemptions without means testing to veterans with a 100% service-connected, permanent and total disability. This is the final step in a three-step process to amend the state constitution. The amendment passed unanimously in both houses during the 2009 and 2010 legislative sessions. This year's bills were sponsored by Senators Puller and Reynolds (SJ13), Delegate O'Bannon (HJ33), Senator Puller (SB31) and Delegate O'Bannon (HB149).

Why does this proposal require a constitutional amendment?

It requires a constitutional amendment since this exemption creates a special class of exemptions.

What does the constitutional amendment process require?

A State constitutional amendment requires that the General Assembly pass the proposed amendment two consecutive years as well as passage by voters. The proposed constitutional amendment will be placed on the ballot this November.

Don't some localities already grant tax exemptions for disabled veterans and the elderly?

Yes, many localities already grant real estate tax exemptions to disabled veterans and the elderly.

Does this exempt 100% service-connected disabled veterans from paying real estate taxes on vacation homes or rental property?

No. This exempts the qualifying veteran from paying real estate taxes only on owner-occupied property used as the sole dwelling of the veteran.

How many 100% service-connected disabled veterans live in Virginia?

The U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs reported that 7,358 Virginia veterans had a 100% service-connected, permanent and total disability as of May 2009. Most of these veterans are concentrated in Northern Virginia, Hampton Roads, and the Richmond area.

Does this proposal have the support of the Veterans Service Organizations?

Yes! This is the top priority in 2010 for the 23 veterans service organizations represented on the Joint Leadership Council of Veterans Service Organizations (JLC). Combined, these organizations have more than 250,000 members.

What can I do to help?

Vote "yes" in November for the real estate tax exemption for 100% service-connected disabled veterans and encourage your family and friends to vote "yes" as well. Veterans rated as 100% disabled continue to suffer from disabilities incurred during active military service to our Nation and the Commonwealth.

When would this constitutional amendment take effect?

If passed by the voters in November, the exemption will take effect January 1, 2011.