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Chapter

116,

THE COMMONWEALTH OF MASSACHUSETTS

In the Year Two Thousand and Four

AN ACT RELATIVE TO THE DEFINITION OF A VETERAN.

Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives in General Court assembled, and by the authority of the same, as follows:

SECTION 1. Clause Forty-third of section 7 of chapter 4 of the General Laws, as appearing in the 2002 Official Edition, is hereby amended by striking out the definition of "Veteran" and inserting in place thereof the following definition:-

"Veteran" shall mean (1) any person, (a) whose last discharge or release from his wartime service as defined herein, was under honorable conditions and who (b) served in the army, navy, marine corps, coast guard, or air force of the United States, or on full time national guard duty under Titles 10 or 32 of the United States Code or under sections 38, 40 and 41 of chapter 33 for not less than 90 days active service, at least 1 day of which was for wartime service; provided, however, that any person who so served in wartime and was awarded a service-connected disability or a Purple Heart, or who died in such service under conditions other than dishonorable, shall be deemed to be a veteran notwithstanding his failure to complete 90 days of active service; (2) a member of the American Merchant Marine who served in armed conflict between December 7, 1941 and December 31, 1946, and who has received honorable discharges from the United States Coast Guard, Army, or Navy; (3) any person (a) whose last discharge from active service was under honorable conditions, and who (b) served in the army, navy, marine corps, coast guard, or air force of the United States for not less than 180 days active service; provided, however, that any person who so served and was awarded a service-connected disability or who died in such service under conditions other than dishonorable, shall be deemed to be a veteran notwithstanding his failure to complete 180 days of active service.

SECTION 2. Notwithstanding any general or special law to the contrary, no benefits provided to a veteran pursuant to chapter 115 of the General Laws or

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any other benefits as provided to the veteran by the commonwealth shall be reduced or extinguished in order to effectuate this act.

House of Representatives, May 17, 2004.

Passed to be enacted, *Steven A. Aulic*, Speaker.

In Senate, May 27, 2004.

Passed to be enacted, *Dean Wilkerson* President.

May 28, 2004.

Approved, *at 1:15 PM.*

Mitt Romney
Governor.