

Mayor April Capone announced her plans to seek additional tax relief for elderly, disabled and veteran residents of the Town of East Haven. She explained, "The national economic crisis has hit all residents of East Haven and these state programs will allow us to provide some additional relief to residents in need."

Currently the Town of East Haven exercises two local tax options to ease the tax burden on elderly, disabled and veteran populations. These programs are sanctioned by the state and municipalities have the option to put them into practice.

The Circuit Breaker is a State law which provides a property tax credit program for Connecticut owners in residence of real property, who are elderly (65 and over) or totally disabled, and whose annual incomes do not exceed certain limits. The credit amount is calculated by the local assessor and applied by the tax collector to the applicant's real property tax bill.

Currently the Town of East Haven is providing that benefit to nearly 600 people in the town at the rate of \$400 per household.

The Veteran's Property Tax Exemption is a similar program for those who have honorably served their country. Generally, to be eligible for veterans' property tax exemptions, a veteran must have been honorably discharged from service after having served at least 90 days of active-duty service in the U. S. Armed Forces during a statutorily defined time of war, unless he was separated earlier because of a Veterans' Administration (VA)-rated service-connected disability or the war lasted for a shorter period and he served for the duration. Veterans still in the service are eligible if they meet the 90-day requirement, as are veterans who retired after 30 years of service. For World War II, veterans with certain Merchant Marine service and military service with allied armies also qualify. A veteran's spouse is ordinarily entitled to the property tax exemption for which the deceased veteran qualified. A sole surviving parent and the minor child of a veteran who died while serving in the armed forces or after receiving an honorable discharge is also entitled to an exemption.

An exemption is a reduction in the property's assessed value on which taxes are owed, not a credit against the amount of the tax. Exemption amounts depend on income, disability, and other factors.

The Town of East Haven has several hundred people engaged in this program and they are receiving an \$8,000 credit on their property tax assessment.

Mayor Capone stated "In light of the difficult economic times and the state mandated revaluation planned for next year I have asked the Town Council to approve an increase these benefits for elderly, disabled and veteran residents of East Haven. This program has remained stagnant for too long. It is to time step up and utilize the tools that State of Connecticut has given us to help people in need."

The Town Council will be meeting Tuesday night (October 4, 2011) at 7:30 pm 91 Taylor Ave East Haven to set a public hearing date.