



**THE AMERICAN LEGION  
DEPARTMENT OF NEW YORK**

**2014 LEGISLATIVE PROGRAM**

**STATUS AS OF 04/27/14**

**The American Legion Family of over 200 thousand members urge the Governor & Legislators to move forward on the legislation listed below to provide our Veterans with the assistance they earned through their service to God and Country.**

In 2014 we enlarged our scope of support to include Legislation that reflects the immediate needs of our Veteran population to include JOBS, SUICIDES & HOMELESSNESS.

We have requested our Legislators to sponsor legislation to address Jobs, Suicides & Homelessness

**JOBS**

**PROVIDES A PREFERENCE IN STATE CONTRACTS FOR SERVICE DISABLED VETERAN OWNED SMALL BUSINESSES**

A5872 – Ortiz - 01/14/14 – S2803-A BALL – Signed by the Governor March 31, 2014

This Bill established a program to provide a state contract preference for service disabled owned small businesses

**SUICIDES** – A Bill is being solicited

**HOMELESSNESS**

**RELATES TO THE PERFORMANCE OF A STUDY REGARDING HOMELESS VETERANS IN THE STATE OF NEW YORK**

A7259-A – Rozic - 04/24/14 Advanced to third reading – Cal 566 – S908-B – Parker – 03/28/14 – Amend & Recommit To Veterans, Homeland Security & Military Affairs – Print # 908B. THESE BILLS ARE NOT “SAME AS”.

## **RESOLUTIONS – Passed at American Legion Convention July 2013**

### **REPEAL OF THE NEW YORK STATE SECURE AMMUNITION AND FIREARMS ACT (SAFE)**

Resolution # 24 at NYS Convention July 18-20, 2013 in Niagara Falls

Looking for Sponsors – The SAFE ACT abridges the rights of Veterans' Organizations to sponsor color guard and firing parties, conduct military funerals, and patriotic ceremonies. We request that all prosecuting authorities in the state of New York duly recognize the Constitutional Rights of Veterans to keep and bear arms of the type with which they trained, carry them in parades, & fire them at funerals and other ceremonies

### **OFFICIALLY RENAME THE STATEN ISLAND EXPRESSWAY TO THE POW/MIA MEMORIAL HIGHWAY**

Resolution # 8 at NYS Convention July 18-20, 2013 in Niagara Falls

A3745- Cusick – 01/08/14 – Referred to Transportation – S4971 LANZA – 01/08/14 – Referred to Investigations & Government Operations

An Act to amend the state law, the highway law and the administrative code of the city of New York in relation to renaming the Staten Island Expressway the "POW-MIA Memorial Highway"

## **LEGISLATION**

### **MILITARY SERVICE CREDIT**

A4936 Cusick – 03/28/14 – Amend & Recommit to Governmental Employees – Print #4936b - S4380-A - Maziarz – 03/28/14 – Amend & Recommit to Civil Service & Pensions – Print # 4380B

Currently members of the retirement system are able to buy back their time from five years of service to two years per Chapter 548 of the NYS Laws of 2000. However, Chapter 548 did not include the same criteria for veterans who wish to buy back their military time as they currently must have FIVE years of service to be eligible for credit under Chapter 548.

### **To Extend the Veterans Service Credit Law of 2000 to All Veterans Who Have Served in the Military**

A6974 Paulin – 02/26/14 – Amend & Recommit to Governmental Employees, Print # 6974a – S4714 Larkin – 02/26/14 – Amend & Recommit to Finance, Print # 4714A

Provides up to Three Years of Service Credit to Members of Public Retirement Systems of the State for Military Service Rendered During Times of Peace. Such Members Must Have at Least Five Years of Credited Service, Not Including Military Service

### **FREE HUNTING, FISHING & TRAPPING LICENSES FOR ACTIVE DUTY SERVICE MEMBERS**

A6011 Giglio – 02/04/14 Amend & Recommit to Environmental Conservation – Print # A6011a - S3900 Young – 01/29/14 Amend & Recommit to Environmental Conservation – Print # 3900A

Free hunting, fishing, and trapping licenses to residents of New York State who are active duty members of the US Armed Forces regardless of where said person is stationed.

**WAIVES CERTAIN FISHING AND HUNTING FEES FOR MEMBERS OF THE UNITED STATES ARMED FORCES IN ACTIVE SERVICE STATIONED WITHIN THE STATE**

A1294 Zebrowski – 01/23/14 Amend & Recommit to Environmental Conservation – Print #1294a - S1102 Maziarz – 01/22/14 Amend & Recommit to Environmental Conservation – Print # 1102A

This act establishes that members of the US armed forces in active service who are stationed within New York State and active members of the state militia; may receive certain licenses, such as fishing, trapping, small and big game free of charge. For residents who are blind, fishing licenses may be obtained free of charge.

**NYS-SLA 30 DAY BILLING POLICY**

A2894 Ortiz – 01/23/14 Passed Assembly, Delivered to Senate, Referred to Investigations & Governmental Operations – S4491 Griffo – 01/08/14 – Referred to Investigations & Government Operations

Return to the State Liquor Authority’s “30 day billing policy” for non-profit organizations.

**RELATES TO USE OF PERSONAL CONFIDENTIAL INFORMATION RECEIVED FROM VETERANS OR FAMILY MEMBERS OF VETERANS RECEIVING SERVICES FROM THE STATE**

A-3348 Sweeney – 01/23/14 – Passed Assembly, Delivered to Senate, & Referred to Veterans, Homeland Security & Military Affairs – S6277 Parker – 01/09/14 – Referred to Veterans, Homeland Security & Military Affairs

The purpose of this legislation is to inform Veterans and their families of the many services and opportunities provided by the New York State Division of Veterans’ Affairs (NYSDVA).

**REQUIRES ANNUAL REPORTS TO CONTAIN INFORMATION SPECIFIC TO VETERAN-OWNED SMALL BUSINESSES**

A6214 Ramos – 01/13/14 – Committed to Veterans’ Affairs - S359 Kennedy – 01/08/14 – Referred to Veterans, Homeland Security & Military Affairs

The purpose of this bill is to require the NYSDVA to include an accounting of the number of veteran-owned small businesses in the State of New York in its annual report to the Governor and members of the Legislature.

**AN ACT TO AMEND THE EDUCATION LAW, IN RELATION TO IN-STATE TUITION AT COLLEGES & UNIVERSITIES**

A7686 Lentol – 01/08/14 - Referred to Higher Education – S5044 – Grisanti - 01/08/14 - Referred to Higher Education & A7162 Lentol – 01/08/14 – Referred to Higher Education – S1978 – Robach – 02/11/14 Reported & Committed to Finance - The Robach Bill has a more liberal Residency Requirement. The Bills provide for in-state tuition at colleges & universities of state university, the city university of New York and community colleges for honorably discharged veterans attending under the federal GI Bills

## **FINALIZED – 2013 & 2014**

### **A PREFERENCE IN STATE CONTACTS FOR SERVICE DISABLED VETERAN OWNED SMALL BUSINESSES**

A5872 – Ortiz & S2803 Ball - Signed by the Governor March 31, 2014

### **VETERANS' ORGANIZATION REAL PROPERTY TAX EXEMPTION**

A2283 Lavine – 07/31/13 & S936 Martins – 07/31/13 Signed CHAP.283

Per NYS Laws, veterans' post buildings are exempt from real estate and school taxes. Presently, most posts support their charitable, educational, and veterans' programs by renting space in their buildings. However, if the renter/tenant is not an exempt entity, the rental portion is taxable. This taxation has a devastating effect on the posts' maintenance and programs. To correct this situation, The American Legion Family urges the NYS Legislature to enact legislation exempting Veterans' Organizations from ALL real property and school taxes.

### **ELIMINATE "SCHOOL TAX ADD BACK"**

A565 Cusick & S1199 Carlucci – 12/18/13 Signed by the Governor December 18, 2013

Current State property tax laws allow partial tax exemption for Veterans, but not for school district property tax. This Bill would allow that exemption.

### **RELATES TO A PROGRAM FOR VETERAN SPEAKERS IN CLASSROOMS TO SUPPLEMENT INSTRUCTIONAL AND EDUCATIONAL ASPECTS OF AMERICAN MILITARY HISTORY**

A1601A Colton & S5030 Carlucci – Signed CHAP.283 July 31, 2013

The purpose of the bill is to create a veteran speaker education program with NYSDVA.

### **VETERANS' CEMETERY BILL**

Provides for the Establishment & Operation of State Veterans Cemeteries by the Division of Veterans' Affairs. **Ball - 04/01/13** - Senator Ball has added an item into the budget authorizing the creation of a NYS Veterans Cemetery through the Federal VA Program. A HUGE SUCCESS!

### **UPDATES STATUTE DIRECTING AGENCIES TO SEEK INFORMATION ON THE STATUS OF VETERANS RECEIVING ASSISTANCE TO PROMOTE REFERRAL OF VETERANS TO AGENCIES FOR BENEFITS**

\*A37A Cusick – No Senate Sponsor in 2012 – It has been determined that there is no need for this Legislation as it is covered by Chapter 62 of the Laws of 2011 (Part C subpart B Section 95)

The purpose of this bill was to update the statute directing agencies to seek information on the status of Veterans who receive assistance to promote the referral of Veterans to the appropriate agencies for benefits.

### **RELATES TO VETERANS WITH DISABILITIES**

A4359 Thiele (MS) – S1562 Lavale

A constitutional amendment that would allow any person who has received an appointment through civil service to be entitled to additional credit if said individual was classified as a veteran with disabilities after the first appointment or promotion. It was voted upon & approved by the electorate on November 5, 2013

