

THE SENATE
STATE OF NEW YORK



PATRICK M. GALLIVAN

December 1, 2014

Honorable Dean G. Skelos
Majority Coalition Leader, New York State Senate
909 Legislative Office Building
Albany, NY 12247

Dear Majority Leader  Skelos:

As you are aware, Governor Cuomo recently vetoed S.7839 – The Military Service Buyback Bill. Many thanks to you and Senator Larkin for the continued leadership on this important issue; however, the fight must now go on. As a co-sponsor of this legislation, which unanimously passed in the Senate, I am requesting that this bill be brought before the Senate to override the Governor's veto or, in the alternative, be included as part of the 2015-16 state budget.

Enacting this legislation will ensure that veterans are treated fairly when it comes to retirement options in New York State. The current law is outdated and haphazardly excludes many veterans who bravely served in our armed forces. While I cannot express the argument as eloquently as the countless veterans and advocates I have met with, I believe it is quite simple – all veterans deserve to be treated fairly.

We must also work with our local governments to ensure this legislation does not operate as an unfunded mandate. This coming budget can include funding to cover any increased costs to local pension systems. Just as we cannot cut costs by denying our veterans the retirement benefits they deserve, we cannot continue to pass the burden of unfunded mandates to our local property taxpayers.

Thank you for your time and attention to this matter. Please do not hesitate to contact my office at (518) 455-3471 if you have any questions or would like to discuss this issue further.

Sincerely,

Handwritten signature of Patrick M. Gallivan in blue ink.

Patrick M. Gallivan
Senator – 59th District

PMG:zp/kb

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