



NEW YORK STATE SENATOR

Joseph P. Addabbo Jr.

## **Addabbo's Cold War Veterans Bill Signed Into Law by Governor**

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### **Press Release**

For Immediate Release

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## **ADDABBO'S COLD WAR VETERANS BILL SIGNED INTO LAW BY GOVERNOR**

Thanks to the diligent work and strong support from Cold War veterans in Queens County and throughout New York State, Governor David A. Paterson officially signed Senate Bill 4766 into law, hereby allowing for New York City and other counties to opt into real property tax exemptions for Cold War veterans. Approximately 882,700 Cold War veterans are now eligible for these exemptions<sup>[1]</sup>. This legislation marks the second veterans bill to have passed the New York State Legislature in a challenging year.

Cold War veterans are defined as serviceman and servicewoman who served on active duty in the United States armed forces between September 2, 1945 and December 26, 1991. The time period encompasses World War II, Korean War, Vietnam War and the Persian Gulf Conflict.

Sponsored by Senator Joseph P. Addabbo, Jr.(D-Howard Beach) in the New York State Senate and Assemblywoman Amy R. Paulin (D-Scarsdale) in the New York State Assembly, municipalities are permitted to choose and offer increased property tax exemptions to these veterans. "It is an honor to demonstrate and recognize the respect that is owed to our veterans and to acknowledge their courageous acts and accomplishments," Senator Addabbo said. "The signing of this bill by Governor Paterson is commendable and serves as a further call of awareness to the financial plight of our brave veterans. I am proud to be one of the leading advocates in assisting our New York State veterans."

Prominent groups, such as *The Jewish War Veterans of the United States of America Department of New York* (JWV) and the *National Ladies Auxiliary of Jewish War Veterans Department of New York*, recognized flaws in the real property tax exemption for veterans and sought to correct the misstep through advocacy and legislation. Of particular interest to the JWV was a need for an expansion of the veterans property tax exemption – particularly for New York City – which was previously unable to opt in. Jerry Alperstein, Legislative Committee Chair, of the JWV Department of New York said: "The bill that was passed amended a 2007 law which had a sunset provision requiring municipalities to opt into the tax exemption by October 2008, less than a year after the bill went into effect. The JWV sought support to get the sunset provision either extended or eliminated. JWV is most

appreciative of Senator Addabbo for sponsoring the bill and helping get it passed.”

Benefits of the bill include facilitating the procedure by excluding the requirement of a municipality to submit a “home rule” bill, which was previously needed in determining a real property tax exemption. Towns and cities can now legally offer higher property tax exemptions to Cold War veterans and additionally, cooperative and tenant-stock holders who reside in cooperative apartments can apply for property tax exemptions to their dwellings.

Veterans who are not currently receiving eligible funds or alternative veterans’ exemption can apply for these benefits. “This bill was a product of constituents and veterans organizations coming to me and requesting this benefit. It is a true picture of how government should work, elected officials listening to the concerns of their people and acting on it.” concluded Senator Addabbo.

For further information on the new exemptions for Cold War Veterans, you can call Senator Addabbo at 718-738-1111.