



NEW YORK STATE SENATOR

Timothy M. Kennedy

More Than 1,000 Vets From Iraq & Afghanistan Out of Work in Western New York – Kennedy Joins Gillibrand for an Important Roundtable WITH Local Veterans and Business Leaders to Find Solutions

TIMOTHY M. KENNEDY February 14, 2011

| ISSUE: **ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT, MILITARY AFFAIRS, UNEMPLOYMENT, VETERANS**



Gillibrand Urges New Tax Credits For Businesses Who Hire Vets Returning from Iraq & Afghanistan, More Job Training, And Better Efforts to Prepare Servicemembers for the Difficult Job Market

Buffalo, NY – With more than 1,000 veterans who served in Iraq and Afghanistan out of work in Western New York, U.S. Senator Kirsten Gillibrand held an important roundtable meeting with veterans and business leaders at the Buffalo and Erie County Naval and Military Park to discuss solutions. N.Y. State Senator Timothy M. Kennedy joined Senator Gillibrand, who began work on the Senate Armed Services Committee this month, as she discussed her plans to provide tax credits for businesses who hire vets, provide more job training for veterans, and establish better methods to prepare troops that are leaving the service for the difficult job market.

“Too many Western New York veterans are coming home to a very bad job market and struggling to find work,” **Senator Gillibrand** said. “They fulfilled their duty to our country, and now we have a moral responsibility to provide veterans with a good paying job and real economic opportunity. The work ethic and character of these veterans make them the most productive and successful members of our workforce, but we have to make sure they have all the tools they need to be successful. The members of our military put their lives on the line to keep us safe, yet struggle to find jobs when they come home. We need a comprehensive approach including job training and employment assistance to the men and women returning home and tax breaks for businesses who hire our veterans.”

Senator Kennedy said, “More than 1,000 proud Western New York veterans, who made the sacrifice to leave their families in order to defend our freedom, have been forced to endure the struggle of unemployment upon their return home. This is a disturbing trend that we need to fix. After risking their lives to protect us, it is our duty to do everything we can to protect veterans and their families, starting with connecting them to good-paying job opportunities. I commend Senator Gillibrand for not only calling attention to this issue, but also for developing real solutions to address the problem.”

With urgent action needed, Senator Kennedy found the roundtable discussion to be a productive first step toward building a cooperative effort to solve the veteran unemployment dilemma.

“Fixing this problem will require a cooperative effort on the federal, state and local levels,” Senator Kennedy said. “In the coming days and weeks, I will be exploring how I can apply some of the ideas shared at the roundtable discussion to my work in state government.”

The Bureau of Labor Statistics indicates that over 15 percent of veterans who have served post 9/11 are unemployed, which is an increase from 12.6 percent unemployment just one year ago. Estimates based on this data and U.S. Census data show that an estimated more than 1,000 Western New York veterans who served in Iraq and Afghanistan are unemployed.

[For more on Senator Gillibrand's proposals, click here.](#)