



NEW YORK STATE SENATOR

Patty Ritchie

Pre-Memorial Day Agenda a Nod to Military

PATTY RITCHIE May 25, 2011

| ISSUE: **MILITARY AFFAIRS, VETERANS**

Series of bills to benefit veterans and active service members

The State Senate marked an early Memorial Day by passing a series of bills to benefit veterans, military service members and their families.

The bills covered a broad range of topics, from a plan to create free fishing events to veterans and active duty service members (a bill cosponsored by Sen. Ritchie) to bills making more veterans eligible for property tax relief.

“Memorial Day reminds us to keep in our thoughts all of those who served and sacrificed for our freedom, but also to remember the many thousands of men and women from our communities who continue to serve our nation today,” Sen. Ritchie said. “I’m pleased that the Senate should choose this time to pause, and then act on measures that show our appreciation to these men and women.”

“With Fort Drum representing one of the most-deployed military units in the nation, it is especially fitting that many of these bills can benefit active duty service members and their families, as well as veterans,” Sen. Ritchie said.

The bills which passed the Senate today include:

- * Free fishing (S.656-A) – authorizes DEC to designate special fishing events for veterans and active duty service members that don't require a fishing license;
- * Custody rights (S.3228) – Protects the rights of deployed military personnel in custody disputes involving minor children;
- * Lifetime fishing for disabled vets (S.193) – Provides lifetime fishing licenses for permanently disabled, honorably discharged veterans;
- * Veterans property tax relief (S.3222) – Makes redeployed veterans eligible for property tax relief offered by towns and counties;
- * Cutting red tape (S.2497) – Makes it easier for veterans to apply for property tax benefits;
- * Care for children of deployed military (S.3192) – Simplifies the process of appointing temporary guardian for minor children during deployment;
- * Privacy protection (S.5337) – Prevents unauthorized use of a service member's name or image in commercials or ads;
- * Access to state lands (S.824) – Gives disabled vets broader access to state lands for recreation purposes.

All of the bills were delivered to the Assembly, except S.656, which already passed the Assembly and can now go to the Governor for his signature.