



NEW YORK STATE SENATOR

Hugh T. Farley

Senate Celebrates Memorial Day WITH Passage of Bills to Help Veterans and Active Military

HUGH T. FARLEY May 26, 2011

| ISSUE: **VETERANS**

State Senator Hugh T. Farley (R, C, I - Schenectady) announced that he and his colleagues in the New York State Senate commemorated the upcoming Memorial Day observance by taking time during the May 25th Session to honor current and former military service members, and especially those who made the ultimate sacrifice.

Nine bills focused on supporting veterans and active service members were passed. Two bills in particular provide important parental rights protections for military service men and women. Bill S.3228 prevents the courts from considering the potential for a military service deployment as a detrimental factor when determining parental custody of a child. So long as the parent provides a suitable child care plan for the period of deployment, under the bill, the courts would not be able to infringe upon that parent's custodial rights, helping more families of service members to stay together.

Bill S.3192 allows a parent to designate a short-term military service guardian, when necessary, during the period in which a custodial parent will be on active military duty. This guardian would only be designated if there is not another parent who has joint custody of the child, a parent whose parental rights have not been terminated, whose whereabouts are

known, and who is willing to make the day-to-day decisions for the child. ."

The other bills acted on included:

- * S. 5337 establishes a crime for the commercial use of the name, image, or likeness of any current or former member of the armed forces or the state militia. Some interest groups have exploited this information without the service member's or family's permission and this legislation seeks to prevent that misuse.

- * S.193 allows certain disabled veterans to purchase a lifetime sportsman license for hunting and fishing at a reduced rate.

- * S.824 gives disabled veterans access to certain restricted bodies of water through the use of float planes and with the creation of a permit system.

- * S.3222 provides for additional veteran real property owner exemptions when veterans are otherwise eligible, but not discharged from a current combat duty status.

- * S.2497 creates a list of suitable documents which support a veteran's eligibility for real property tax exemptions.

- * S.4569 ensures that all funds paid as rent for non-military use of an armory would continue to be paid into a special account that is used to pay operating costs for New York Army National Guard armories statewide.

- * S.656A allows the creation of free fishing events that provide physical or emotional rehabilitation for veterans or active duty service members. No fishing license would be required to participate.

The bills have been sent to the Assembly.