



NEW YORK STATE SENATOR

Charles J. Fuschillo Jr.

Senator Fuschillo Fights to Protect Families of Fallen Soldiers

CHARLES J. FUSCHILLO JR. June 27, 2011

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Senator Charles J. Fuschillo, Jr. (R-Merrick) announced that the New York State Senate passed legislation he supports to protect the families of fallen soldiers. The legislation is designed to limit protestors' ability to disrupt the funerals of American servicemen and women.

"Families of soldiers who died defending our freedom deserve to be able to say their final goodbyes in peace. Laying a loved one to rest is a difficult and emotional thing to do as it is; dealing with disruptions from hateful protestors only adds to that pain. Creating new protections for these families, who have made the ultimate sacrifice in defense of our country, is the right thing to do," said Senator Fuschillo.

The legislation passed by the State Senate (S5605 and S3901A) would:

- * Triple the existing buffer zone for protests around a religious service, funeral, burial, or memorial service
- * Enable local governments to develop and implement a process requiring any group wishing to protest a funeral to obtain a permit.
- * Give local governments the ability to fine protestors who fail to comply with permit requirements.

A recent U.S. Supreme Court decision recognized that persons who protest at funerals of military personnel have constitutional rights, but also that states have a compelling interest in protecting the family and friends of deceased military personnel while they are mourning at such events.

The legislation has also been approved by the State Assembly and will be sent to Governor Cuomo for consideration.

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