



NEW YORK STATE SENATOR

Jack M. Martins

## Senate Passes Bill to Honor Fallen Firefighters

JACK M. MARTINS June 13, 2012

| ISSUE: **LOCAL GOVERNMENT, FIREFIGHTERS**

| COMMITTEE: **LOCAL GOVERNMENT**

### *Legislation Also Passed that Allows Volunteer Firefighters to be Absent from Work During States of Emergency*

The Senate passed a bill (S.6368A) that would allow members of volunteer fire departments and volunteer ambulance squads to take an authorized absence from work when they respond to a state of emergency.

Senator Jack M. Martins strongly supported the bill. "Our firefighters and emergency personnel are always to respond it times of emergency. They should have the security to know that their jobs will be protected when they are serving to protect their communities in times when there is a state of emergency," he said.

This legislation will prevent employers from charging volunteers with vacation, sick leave or other excused absences when there is a state of emergency.

Since 1954, the state of New York has asked FEMA to declare almost 60 major disaster declarations for everything from snowstorms to earthquakes to ice storms. In 2011, New York was hit by Tropical Storm Lee, Hurricane Irene, flooding, tornadoes, snowstorms, and straight-line winds.

The New York State Senate also passed a bill (S.7458), sponsored by Senate Majority Leader Dean G. Skelos (R, Rockville Centre) and supported by Senator Martins, that would ensure the names of firefighters who are killed while performing services in the line of duty be included on the New York State Fallen Firefighters Memorial.

“Our firefighters put their lives on the line each and every time they respond to a distress call,” Senator Skelos said. “They all deserve our respect, and those that give their lives in the service of others while in the line of duty deserve to be included in a lasting memorial such as the New York State Fallen Firefighters Memorial.”

The Fallen Firefighters Memorial recognizes those firefighters from throughout the state who made the ultimate sacrifice for their community. The Memorial hosts an annual ceremony that draws firefighters from throughout New York and serves as an occasion for remembrance and healing.

The bills have been sent to the Assembly.