



NEW YORK STATE SENATOR

Timothy M. Kennedy

As Nation Celebrates Independence Secured by Armed Forces, Senator Kennedy Pushes for New Support for NY's Military Families

TIMOTHY M. KENNEDY July 3, 2013

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Kennedy wants new legislation that will help military families live more comfortably and make ends meet, after making great sacrifices for state and nation.

Kennedy's bills will provide tuition assistance for children whose parents served in armed forces, help vets and their families cover property tax bills, boost veterans' access civil-service jobs.

Kennedy: Entire families bear the burden of sacrifice when a son or daughter, husband or wife, father or mother is called to duty to protect our freedom and security. Our state must do more to support

military families.

BUFFALO, N.Y. – As the nation and state prepares to celebrate the independence secured and protected by our armed forces, Senator Tim Kennedy, D-Buffalo, is pushing for new legislation to ensure greater support for New York's military families. Kennedy has proposed new measures that would provide tuition assistance for children whose parents served in the armed forces and much-needed property tax relief for veterans and their families. He's also urging action on legislation to help veterans gain access to civil service jobs.

"America's veterans and active-duty troops make enormous sacrifices in service to our nation, and the families of those who serve shoulder the sacrifice alongside their loved one," Kennedy said. "Entire families bear the burden of sacrifice when a son or daughter, husband or wife, father or mother is called to duty to protect the freedom and independence that every American treasures. Showing our gratitude and appreciation starts by saying 'thank you' to our troops and veterans, but it can't end there. Our state must do more support New York's military families. They've served us. When they return home, let us not forget to serve them.

"We need to ensure veterans, active-duty servicemembers and their families have the support they need to make ends meet and live more comfortably after they risked their lives to keep our families safe," Kennedy added. "We should help their kids cover the rising costs of college, make their property tax bills more affordable, and help them gain access to good-paying civil service jobs. That would be a great start to pay back all we owe our veterans for the security and freedom our nation enjoys, and ensure Western New York remains a great place for our heroes to call home. I urge my colleagues to join me in support of this important package of legislation."

In recognition of the great sacrifices made by veterans and their families, Kennedy's bill (S.365) will provide tuition awards to children of veterans, living or deceased, who served in armed conflict on behalf of the United States. These financial aid awards will cover the cost of tuition at any college or community college in the SUNY or CUNY systems, and they will be equal to the cost of undergraduate tuition, offset by any outside or institutional financial assistance or scholarship award the student receives.

Kennedy's bill (S.823) to help make veterans' property tax bills more affordable will also provide a measure of mandate relief for local municipalities. It will replace the current system that grants veterans property tax exemptions funded by local governments with a new system funded by the state. The bill Kennedy sponsors would provide a personal income tax credit for real property taxes paid by honorably discharged veterans or the surviving spouses of veterans. The amount of the personal income tax credit will be determined based upon the property taxes paid and the service rendered by an individual in the armed forces.

Senator Kennedy has also introduced legislation (S.372) to waive civil service examination fees for veterans. Kennedy wants to break down any barriers preventing military veterans from pursuing employment in public service, whether it be as a police officer, firefighter or government employee. Kennedy also supports measures to provide veterans with additional hiring credits for civil service jobs.

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Senator Timothy M. Kennedy represents the New York State Senate's 63rd District, which is comprised of the town of Cheektowaga, the city of Lackawanna and nearly all of the city of Buffalo. More information is available at <http://kennedy.nysenate.gov>.