



NEW YORK STATE SENATOR

Patrick M. Gallivan

Senator Gallivan Backs Military Service Buyback Bill for All Veterans

PATRICK M. GALLIVAN December 8, 2014

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Senator Patrick M. Gallivan (R-C-I, Elma) is urging the State Senate to override Governor Cuomo's veto of a bill (S.7839) which would extend New York's Military Service Credit Law to all active public employees who served in the military, allowing them to purchase up to three years of retirement credit for their military service. Under the existing law, only veterans who served during specified conflicts are eligible to participate in the buyback program.

"The current law is outdated and haphazardly excludes many veterans who bravely served in our armed forces. It's time for New York to treat all our veterans equally," Gallivan said.

Gallivan co-sponsored the legislation which unanimously passed the Senate in June. It was approved in the Assembly on a vote of 133-1. In a letter to Senate Majority Leader Dean Skelos, Gallivan requests the bill be brought back to the Senate for an override vote. Another option is to include the measure as part of the 2015-16 state budget.

Gallivan says the state must also work with local governments to ensure the legislation does not result in an unfunded mandate. He says funding should be included in the state budget to cover any increased costs to the local pension system.

“While we can’t continue to pass the burden of unfunded mandates on to local governments and property taxpayers, we can’t deny our veterans the retirement benefits they deserve,” Gallivan said.

The legislation would amend the state’s retirement and social security law by providing credit to members of public retirement systems of the state for military services.