



NEW YORK STATE SENATOR

Joseph P. Addabbo Jr.

## **Release: Senate and Assembly Pass Bill Co-Sponsored by Addabbo to Provide All Veterans With Opportunity to Purchase Up to Three Years of Retirement Credit**

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Queens, NY (June 29, 2015) NYS Senator Joseph P. Addabbo, Jr. recently joined with his Senate colleagues in approving legislation (S.5937) he co-sponsors to provide all active state public employee veterans with the opportunity to purchase up to three years of pension credit prior to retirement – a benefit that is now only available to former members of the armed forces who served during certain specified conflicts. The bill (A.8174) has also been passed by the State Assembly, and will be heading to the Governor for final action.

“This legislation would provide pension buy back equity for public employee veterans who served their country at times not now specified in state law,” said Addabbo, who serves as the ranking member on the Senate Committee on Veterans, Homeland Security and Military Affairs. “All of our public employee veterans, regardless of where or when they wore the uniform, deserve our gratitude and the opportunity to purchase the pension credit they lost while serving all of us in the armed forces.”

The proposal, which was approved by the Senate and Assembly last year and then vetoed by Governor Cuomo, would enable public employee veterans who served in peacetime – as well as a number of conflicts in Somalia, Bosnia, Haiti, Kosovo, Afghanistan, Pakistan, and the Korean DMZ – to buy the pension credits for their military service. Eligible veterans, who must have been honorably discharged, must have at least five years of credited public service before applying for the credits.

Currently, the New York State Military Service Credit Law applies to veterans who served in World War II, the Vietnam War, and the Korean War, as well as to servicemen and women who earned certain expeditionary medals during conflicts in Lebanon, Grenada and Panama. Other eligible veterans include those who served in the Theater of operations including Iraq, Kuwait, Saudi Arabia, Bahrain, Qatar, United Arab Emirates, Oman, Gulf of Aden, Gulf of Oman, Persian Gulf, Red Sea and the airspace above these locations beginning in August of 1990.

“I am hopeful the Governor will ultimately join with the Legislature and approve this measure to both show appreciation for our veterans and allow them to buy back some of their military service as they approach retirement,” Addabbo said. “It was the right thing to do last year, and it’s the right thing to do in 2015.”