



NEW YORK STATE SENATOR

Robert G. Ortt

## Ortt Introduces Legislation Following Tennessee Shooting

ROBERT G. ORTT July 24, 2015

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### *Senator's Bill Would Implement Better Safety Measures at Military Recruiting Centers*

**BUFFALO** – On the heels of the Chattanooga shooting, Senator Rob Ortt (R,C,I – North Tonawanda) gathered with local leaders and veterans at the Buffalo and Erie County Naval & Military Park today to announce legislation he is introducing to better protect members of the National Guard and ROTC around the state. Senator Ortt's bill (S.6021A) would establish a 13-member group of experts to examine New York State National Guard recruiting centers and ROTC units and form recommendations to improve their security and protection

systems.

This legislation comes in response to the five service members who were shot and killed last week at a military recruitment station and naval training center in Chattanooga, Tennessee.

“As a veteran of the NY Army National Guard who served in Afghanistan, this violent attack hits close to home,” said **Senator Ortt**. “In the military, we’re trained to be vigilant at all times for any potential danger, but many of us don’t really expect to have to have our guard up on home territory. This bill would not only put minds at ease and better protect our service men and women, but would also help prevent future incidents, like Chattanooga’s, from happening. Arm our members of the Armed Forces instead of making them targets, secure our facilities as we've done across the country, and protect those sworn to protect us.”

Ortt’s bill would make necessary changes to National Guard recruiting centers and ROTC units to better protect and defend employees, recruits, visitors and other individuals against any acts of violence or terrorism.

The 13-member workgroup would make recommendations on issues including:

- a. Providing sidearms or issuing permits to carry a concealed firearm to full-time National Guard and ROTC personnel employed at recruiting centers or ROTC sites;
- b. Improving and strengthening building security by installing metal detectors, bulletproof glass, video surveillance equipment and barricades to limit vehicle access;
- c. Relocating recruiting or training centers to armories or other secure locations; and
- d. Implementing any additional measures deemed necessary by the workgroup to protect employees, recruits, visitors and any other individuals at New York National Guard recruiting centers and ROTC units.

The workgroup would be made up of 13 members who have expertise in the fields of public safety, terrorism, or military affairs. They would consist of: the adjutant general of the Division of Military and Naval Affairs – who will serve as the workgroup’s chairperson; the chair of the Senate Committee on Veterans; Homeland Security and Military Affairs; the commissioner of the Division of Homeland Security and Emergency Services, the chair of the Assembly Committee on Veterans’ Affairs; the superintendent of State Police; four members appointed by the Governor; two members appointed by the Temporary President of the Senate; and two members appointed by the Speaker of the Assembly.

The workgroup would convene by March 1, 2016 and would continue to issue periodic reports of recommendations.

New York State Assemblyman Steve Hawley (R,C,I – Batavia) is introducing the bill in the Assembly.

“Ensuring the safety of our National Guard is a priority and I am pleased Senator Ortt is joining me to encourage our colleagues in the State Legislature to support and enact this bill,” said Assemblyman Hawley. “It will remain a priority for us both as we prepare for the upcoming session.”

Assemblywoman Jane Corwin is also co-sponsoring the bill.