



NEW YORK STATE SENATOR

Andrea Stewart-Cousins

## Important Bills Passed This Week: High School Diplomas to All Vets, Enhanced Penalties for Endangering Children, and More!

ANDREA STEWART-COUSINS May 8, 2014

### **Designating September as Firefighter, Police Officer and Emergency Medical Technician**

**Appreciation Month:** First responders provide vital services in both isolated emergencies and regional crises, and their value has never been more apparent than after 9/11. Senate bill S.1957 establishing September as Firefighter, Police Officer and Emergency Medical Technician Month is intended to honor first responders for their service in the past, present and future.

**Awarding High School Diplomas to All Veterans of the Armed Forces:** New York already awards high school diplomas to veterans of World War II, The Korean War, and The Vietnam War, but other veterans are not eligible under current law. Senate Bill S.6292 will broaden eligibility to include all veterans of the Armed Forces regardless of whether or not their service was provided during wartime.

**Enhanced Penalties for Endangering the Welfare of a Child:** Endangering the Welfare of a Child is a broadly defined crime that includes offenses ranging from leaving a child in a car unattended to extreme physical abuse, all of which are treated as misdemeanors. Senate bill S.2475 creates a new class-D felony offense to be applied on repeat offenders and those who put children at risk of serious physical injury or prolonged emotional impairment, and in cases where the abused child is under the age of 11.