



NEW YORK STATE SENATOR

David J. Valesky

Thank You to Our Veterans

DAVID J. VALESKY November 10, 2014

Tuesday is Veterans Day, and I want to extend my sincere appreciation to everyone who has served our country. Advocating for our veterans has always been, and will continue to be, one of my highest priorities. To that end, in the 2014-2015 Enacted Budget I supported \$3.1 million for veterans assistance programs, expanded eligibility for the Gold Star Parent Annuity, and a new measure that includes veteran businesses within the Department of Economic Development's Entrepreneurial Assistance Program.

I also supported several veterans bills that passed the Senate during the 2014 Session, including [S.6563A](#), which provides for full property tax exemption for disabled veterans; [S.6865](#), which I co-sponsored, would establish a program to increase participation of service-disabled veteran-owned businesses in state contracting; [S.6292](#), which would allow any veteran who has served this nation to be awarded a high school degree based on their knowledge and experience gained while in service; as well as a number of bills that would provide tax relief to veterans.

Home Energy Assistance Available Beginning November 17

Households that need heating assistance can begin [applying online](#) for New York's Home Energy Assistance Program on Monday, November 17. Eligible households can receive a one-time benefit of up to \$625 this winter from the program, which is federally funded.

The program can assist eligible applicants regardless of whether they own their home or rent. Eligibility is determined by income and how many people live in the household. The maximum regular benefit a household can receive for the 2014-15 heating season is \$625. Anyone can apply for the program with their [local department of social services](#). Visit the [Home Energy Assistance Program website](#) for more information.

Workshop to Help Food, Beverage, and Agricultural Businesses with Financing

The Community Relations Division of the Federal Reserve Bank of New York and U.S. Small Business Administration are co-sponsoring a technical assistance workshop for food, beverage, and agricultural enterprises in Upstate New York interested in learning about traditional and alternative sources of financing.

Attendees will hear from lenders on a wide range of topics, including which types of financing are most appropriate for their needs, what lenders look for in potential borrowers, alternatives to traditional bank loans, tips on improving their chances for success, and available opportunities and financing tools for expansion to international markets. There will be a resource expo held after the workshop.

The workshop will be held Tuesday, November 18, from 8:00 a.m. - 1:00 p.m. at the New York State Fairgrounds Empire Room. It is open to the public. Visit the [Federal Reserve Bank of New York website](#) for an agenda and to register.

For more information, contact Shira Gans, Director, Federal Reserve Bank of New York, at Shira.Gans@ny.frb.org.

Start Planning Next Summer's Trip Now

New virtual tours are now available for New York State parks and campgrounds. The virtual tours offer 360-degree views of scenic vistas, popular attractions, and campgrounds, making

it easier than ever to plan a trip to experience New York.

The virtual tours include both moving "spins" and still images of a variety of State-owned parks, campgrounds, trails, playgrounds, pavilions, golf courses, boat launches, beaches, and pools in the parks, as well as landscapes and premium viewing spots. Each virtual tour includes multiple scenes and key information about the property. View the tours on the [State Parks](#) and [Department of Environmental Conservation](#) websites.

New American/Refugee Coat and Blanket Drive

There's still time to drop off your gently used blankets and washable coats, hats, and gloves at my Syracuse office for refugee toddlers, youth, women, and men. I am holding the coat and blanket drive in partnership with InterFaith Works/Center for New Americans through November 21. Please donate your items in the lobby of the State Office Building, 333 E. Washington St., Syracuse. Thank you.