



NEW YORK STATE SENATOR

William Larkin

## Larkin: Veterans' Equality Act Signed Into Law

[WILLIAM LARKIN](#) June 1, 2016

Senator Bill Larkin (R-C-I, 39<sup>th</sup> District) and Assemblywoman Amy Paulin (D-88) are pleased to announce that Governor Cuomo signed the Veterans' Equality Act into law last night.

The new law, which Senator Larkin and Assemblywoman Paulin sponsored, will allow all honorably discharged veterans who are members of a New York State retirement system to purchase service credit for up to three years of military service performed. Previously, only veterans who served during certain specified periods of war are eligible for this benefit. This unfairly excluded a substantial number of veterans, such as those who have served recently in Afghanistan.

"Allowing veterans to improve their retirement to assure a greater financial security is a small price to pay for all they have done for our State and our Country," said Senator Larkin. "It was an absolute shame that our Afghanistan veterans and those who have fought in other recent conflicts were not eligible for this military service credit."

"I am thrilled that Governor Cuomo decided to sign this bill into law," Assemblywoman Amy Paulin said. "Our veterans deserve all the respect and consideration we can possibly give them. By signing this bill into law we have shown our veterans that we care and that we acknowledge their contribution and sacrifice regardless of whether they volunteered in a time of conflict or a time of peace."

I would also like to thank all the veterans for their support in getting this bill passed and signed. We have worked long and hard and I am very proud of this piece of legislation."

Marlene Roll, Statewide Commander of New York Veterans of Foreign Wars said: "The Veterans of Foreign Wars New York expresses extreme gratitude to Senator Larkin for the steadfast commitment to New York Veterans and this most important legislation. The message he sends that our great State welcomes their veterans back home and is grateful for their service is heart warming and the complete inclusion of women in the pension option was long overdue".

Christian Farrell, Director of Orange County Veterans Services said: "I applaud Senator Bill Larkin and state lawmakers for recognizing that all veterans will benefit under the passage of the new veterans equality act. When you raise your right hand to serve it's out of your control whether the nation will be at war while in your uniform. What matters most is the selfless decision to serve one's country now recognized by the passage of the Veterans Equality Act."

"This new measure will help to ensure that all of our veterans receive the benefits and credits that they earned and richly deserve for their service and sacrifice in defense of our nation," said Senator Larkin. "I would like to thank Assemblywoman Paulin for her help in shepherding this legislation through the Assembly and all the veteran advocates who worked tirelessly over the past few years—never giving up the fight to have this important legislation signed into law."