



NEW YORK STATE SENATOR

Andrew J. Lanza

Senator Lanza, Assemblyman Cusick Join Staten Island Council Delegation to Announce Lanza/Cusick Bill Authorizing Tax Exemption for New York City Veterans Signed by Governor Cuomo; Council Member Matteo Will Sponsor Companion Bill in City Council.

ANDREW J. LANZA October 3, 2016

| ISSUE: **VETERANS**



On Monday, October 3rd Senator Andrew Lanza (R – Staten Island) and Assemblyman Michael Cusick (D – Mid-Island) held a joint press conference with Council Members Steven Matteo (R – Mid-Island) & Debi Rose (D – North Shore) at the Marine Corps League 246th

Detachment, to announce their legislation (S.7121/A.9688), which authorizes the New York City Council to grant a property tax exemption for veteran homeowners in the City of New York, has been signed by Governor Cuomo. Additionally, Council Member Matteo announced that he has drafted and will introduce legislation in the City Council which would grant this exemption for the tens of thousands of veteran homeowners in the City of New York.

In 2013, Cusick passed legislation which authorized all school districts in New York State to offer this tax exemption by a vote of the local school board, however three years of bureaucratic disagreement with the City of New York meant that New York City's veterans were not being offered the same opportunity. This led Senator Lanza & Assemblyman Cusick to author and pass the law announced today.

"While I believe that our original legislation covered the City of New York, Senator Lanza and I authored this bill to make it crystal clear that the City Council has the authority to offer this exemption" said Assemblyman Cusick. "I am confident that with the leadership of the Staten Island City Council delegation, veterans in the five boroughs will see incredibly well deserved property tax relief."

Senator Lanza said: "This law grants qualified veterans in NYC, upon approval of the City Council an exemption on their school taxes. It is only fitting that we show our commitment to military veterans who have sacrificed so much to protect our freedom. As the proud sponsor of this bill, I think it is important that we demonstrate our unwavering commitment to honor and properly recognize our veterans' service to America."

Council Minority Leader Steven Matteo said: "This veterans' property tax exemption will provide a modicum of financial relief for those New Yorkers who have sacrificed so much, defending this country and securing our freedoms. It is the least we can do, and our veterans deserve no less. I am honored to shepherd this bill through the Council, along with my Staten Island colleagues, to ensure that our veterans can take advantage of this benefit. Assemblyman Cusick and Senator Lanza deserve a lot of thanks for their bi-partisan effort to make this exemption one step closer to reality."

Council Member Debi Rose said: "We all owe our veterans a tremendous debt. And while we can never fully repay it, I hope that what we're doing today will make a difference in their lives. This legislation is necessary because New York's property tax exemptions for veterans do not include school taxes, which leaves our veterans with a bill that can reach \$400 dollars for a single family homeowner. When enacted, it will alleviate the property tax bills of more than 130,000 veterans in our city. Thanks to the hard work of our state representatives, led by Assemblyman Cusick, the necessary state legislation has been signed into law. I am proud to co-sponsor this legislation with Minority Leader Matteo, and we plan to make its passage in the City Council swift so that our city's veterans can begin to enjoy this well-earned exemption."

Joining the elected representatives were members of various Staten Island veterans groups all of whom have advocated on behalf of this legislation for many years.