



NEW YORK STATE SENATOR

Terrence Murphy

## Fighting for our Veterans: Senator Murphy and Byrne team up to prevent state cuts at Putnam County Veterans' Affairs Office

TERRENCE MURPHY May 26, 2017

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Carmel, NY - Fighting for our veterans, Senator Murphy and Assemblyman Kevin Byrne have combined their efforts and resources to contest the elimination of the New York State Division of Veterans' Affairs position housed out of the Putnam County Office of Veteran's Affairs. Most recently, the pair of legislators made a strong case for keeping the additional position in Putnam County in a letter to Eric J. Hesse, Director of the New York State Division of Veteran Affairs.

"We understand that this proposal is purely a financial decision, but eliminating this position is unacceptable. There are many concerns over the impact this cut might have on our veterans, many whom are elderly and disabled," said Senator Murphy. "Reducing the Putnam County office would require our veterans to travel longer distances in order to seek the assistance they need and deserve. They would be forced to travel to Castle Point twenty-five miles away, a significantly further commute than the current Putnam office."

"Brennan Mahoney is known throughout the 94th Assembly District as the 'go to guy' when veterans are seeking assistance," Assemblyman Byrne said. "It was that way when I worked with during my time as a staffer in Congress, and it is still that way as I now serve as your State Assemblyman. I find it deplorable that the New York Division of Veterans Affairs would restrict access to resources that our military veterans depend on in Putnam County."

The position elimination would not change the status of the Veterans Service Officer for Putnam's Office. He will still be employed five days per week by the State, transferring to Castle Point to work alongside another full time service officer at the same location. With the payroll cost of this position still on the books, and the Putnam County Veterans Service Agency willing to provide free office space, clerical support and amenities to the NYS Division of Veterans Affairs, anticipated cost savings would at best, be minimal the legislators claim.

The Putnam County Office of Veteran's Affairs has served as the perfect model of State and County government consolidation. Currently, the State and Putnam County government work together to assist veterans. Putnam County funds housing the New York State Division Service officer, and provides secretarial assistance for the two days the service officer is on site. In addition, the County also provides clerical assistance on the other three

days of the week to schedule appointments, provide phone service and computer access at no charge to the State.