



NEW YORK STATE SENATOR

Robert G. Ortt

## **Ortt, Western New York Warriors Flight Takes Off for D.C.**

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September 29, 2017

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Senator Rob Ortt (R,C,I – North Tonawanda) today led just over two dozen local veterans in the third annual Western New York Warriors Flight to Washington, D.C. to visit several war memorials dedicated in their honor. Prior to takeoff, the American Legion Stephen Sikora Post 1322 held a special sendoff ceremony at the Buffalo Niagara International Airport for the 25 World War II, Korean War, and Vietnam veterans

“These trips are so moving for everyone involved – myself especially,” **said Senator Ortt.** “These men and women alongside me fought so bravely for our country and they epitomize the greatness of these United States. They make the journey not only to see the powerful monuments in their honor, but also to pay respect to the memorials of their fellow service members. We have lost so many who never had the chance to visit these monuments and so many who paid the ultimate sacrifice and never made it home. This is our small way of giving back to them - the millions of Americans who served and the thousands who died protecting our country and preserving our liberties.”

The veterans were chaperoned by local volunteers as they traveled around the nation’s capital. The group visited the National WWII Memorial, Korean War Memorial, Vietnam War Memorial, Lincoln Memorial, Iwo Jima Memorial, the “Changing of the Guard” ceremony at the Tomb of the Unknown Soldier in Arlington National Cemetery, among other notable sites. During an emotional wreath laying ceremony at the WWII and Korean War memorials, the group paused to reflect on

the lives lost in service.

The Patriot Guard Riders concluded the trip with a Welcome Home Ceremony at the Buffalo airport. Several members of the Patriot Guard lined the arrival area with the American flag at their sides, and saluted and thanked each veteran for their service.

The WNY Warriors Flight was made possible with a \$25,000 grant from the Walmart Foundation, making the trip free for the veterans. Other partners included the Niagara USA Chamber of Commerce and Health Systems Services, which provided wheelchairs for the vets. The Niagara Frontier Transportation Authority, Transportation Security Administration and Southwest Airlines also helped to make the trip an enjoyable experience.