



NEW YORK STATE SENATOR

Alexis Weik

## SENATOR WEIK URGES STATE TO BREAK LOGJAM ON VITAL VETERANS FUNDS

ALEXIS WEIK January 15, 2021

| ISSUE: **ACCESS TO GOVERNMENT FUNDING**



Senator Weik (R-C, Sayville) penned a letter, along with other Senate Republicans, to the head of the Senate's Veterans Committee, John Brooks, urging that the Senate release funds for the Pfc. Joseph Dwyer Peer-to-Peer Support Program. The program has provided counseling, mental health and other services to more than 10,000 Suffolk veterans, and has been widely hailed by veterans and mental health professionals as a success in helping veterans struggling with after effects of combat, including PTSD and traumatic brain injury.

It was expanded to Nassau County in 2013, and now includes counties across the state.

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*“Suffolk County includes our state’s largest concentration of military veterans who, like Joseph Patrick Dwyer, gave selflessly to defend and protect our freedom, and many of them are among countless veterans across this state who have benefited from Pfc. Dwyer’s namesake program to find healing and recovery from the hidden wounds of war. We owe it to Pfc. Dwyer’s memory -- and to all these American heroes -- to keep our promise and help them fully return to their families and communities,” said Senator Weik.*

The 2020-21 State Budget included \$4.5 million in funding for the Dwyer programs, but Senate Democrats have inexplicably failed to authorize the release of the funds. In her letter, Senator Weik and her colleagues stated flatly, “New York State has made a commitment to



s to honor that commitment.”

Pfc. Dwyer, a Mt. Sinai native, enlisted in the Army after 9/11 and served as a combat medic in the 3<sup>rd</sup> Infantry Division. He died after returning from a tour in Iraq.

In Suffolk County, the Joseph P. Dwyer Program is administered by Suffolk County United Veterans, part of the Association for Mental Health and Wellness. Veterans can learn more by calling (631) 853-8345; email: [mleis@mhaw.org](mailto:mleis@mhaw.org)

Senator Weik serves as a member of the Senate's Committee on Veterans, Homeland Security and Military Affairs.

A copy of the Senators' letter can be found at:

<https://www.scribd.com/document/490818088/Dwyer-Letter-1-14-2021>