



NEW YORK STATE SENATOR

Anthony H. Palumbo

## Senator Anthony Palumbo: Supporting Suffolk's Veteran Population

ANTHONY H. PALUMBO March 15, 2022

| ISSUE: **VETERANS, JOSEPH DWYER PEER-TO-PEER VETERANS' SUPPORT PROGRAM; STATE BUDGET**



Suffolk County is home to one of the largest veterans' populations in the nation and has the largest veteran's population in New York State. It is truly humbling to live and serve in a community with such a proud history and culture of military service.

This past week, to help provide additional support and services for veterans, with an emphasis on disabled vets, my office hosted an informative zoom session with Senator Alexis Weik and Senate Republican Leader Rob Ortt, a United States Army Combat Veteran.

During the virtual meeting, we discussed several proposals we are working on enacting in this year's State Budget, including enhanced funding for the Joseph P. Dwyer Peer to Peer program and transforming the state's Division of Military Affairs into a full State Agency.

These commitments would help to ensure that the Suffolk County Veterans community is better served, help veterans with the transition back to civilian life and greatly reduce the tragic number of suicide deaths of those who served in the Armed Forces.

During the meeting we also touched on new legislation, which I am co-sponsoring to provide COVID relief funds to organizations that serve our veterans and their families.

Senate Bill (S.8504), known as the Veterans Service Organizations (VSOs) COVID-19 Relief Act, would establish a \$10 million fund to provide grants of up to \$50,000 to provide financial support to veterans' service organizations throughout the state.

Under the new proposal, veterans service organizations – including VFW's, American Legions, and others – would have the opportunity to apply for grants of up to \$50,000 to help them with expenses such as rent, mortgage payments, debt payments, or necessary business expenses including maintenance costs, administrative costs, state and local taxes and fees, operating leases, and insurance payments.

This funding is greatly needed to help these amazing organizations, which have been hit hard during the pandemic, continue to provide the help, services and assistance to the region's veterans and their families.

Lastly, my office is accepting nominations for this year's New York State Senate Veterans Hall of Fame, which will take place on May 3, 2022 in Albany. The Hall Of Fame is an excellent opportunity to honor a veteran from our community and recognize their service to our State and Nation.

For more information on the Hall of Fame and how to nominate a veteran for this recognition, please contact my office at [palumbo@nysenate.gov](mailto:palumbo@nysenate.gov) by Friday April 1<sup>st</sup>.

Our Veterans put it all on the line to protect our freedoms and our nation. As Senator, I believe strongly that it is our obligation to do everything in our power to help our veterans in need and assist the programs and organizations that provide them support and care.

As always, if you need any help or assistance with a veteran related issue or any other matter, please do not hesitate to contact my office.

Senator Anthony Palumbo