

**Ranking Minority Member:**

Children and Families

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Social Services

**THE SENATE  
STATE OF NEW YORK**



**JAMES N. TEDISCO  
Senator, 49th District**

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May 24, 2019

Betsy DeVos  
U.S. Secretary of Education  
400 Maryland Avenue, SW  
Washington, D.C. 20202

Dear Secretary DeVos:

As the federal government works to make college more affordable for all U.S. citizens, I write to respectfully request the U.S. Department of Education explore the steps necessary to create a federal student loan forgiveness program for Gold Star Families – those spouses and children of our brave U.S. Service Members who gave their life in service to the United States of America.

Given the crushing burden of student loan debt that many college graduates face, this hardship is compounded with the loss of a parent or spouse who gave their last full measure of devotion in defense of our great nation while under active duty.

Here in New York State, the Governor, through Executive Order, has made all Gold Star families eligible for up to \$24,250 in free college tuition at New York State schools. While this is a wonderful program for new and current students, it does not help those Gold Star families who have already graduated and are struggling to pay off their federal student loan debt.

I hope you would agree that if there's anyone who deserves a helping hand from our state and federal governments, it's the children and loved ones of the men and women who make up the best, brightest and most courageous and compassionate fighting force for good on Earth and literally gave everything so we can live safe and free. Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "James N. Tedisco".

James N. Tedisco  
New York State Senate  
49<sup>th</sup> Senate District

CC: NYS Congressional Delegation