



NEW YORK STATE SENATOR

Eric Adams

## Committee Meeting: Veterans, Homeland Security, Military Affairs: 3-17-09

ERIC ADAMS March 31, 2009

| COMMITTEE: **VETERANS, HOMELAND SECURITY AND MILITARY AFFAIRS**

Meeting of the Senate Committee on Veterans, Homeland Security and Military Affairs

New York State Senator Eric Adams, Chair of the Senate Committee on Veterans, Homeland Security and Military Affairs, convened a meeting of the Committee on Tuesday, March 17th, 2009. This was the third occasion the Committee has met. Chairman Adams placed three bills on the agenda:

S.103 by Senator Sampson: This bill empowers local municipalities to exempt reservists (a member of a reserve component of the US military, i.e. Army Reserves, Navy Reserves) from local property tax in accordance with Real Property Tax law. The individual must have been called to active duty for at least 90 days. This bill addresses a gap in the law that omits Military Reserve from possible exemption, and has affected 2,000 people since 2003.

S.2644 by Senator Adams: This bill amends the executive law that allows the Governor, after a state disaster emergency has been declared, to extend state and local deadlines (such as property tax or grant applications). The amendments to the law are as follows: the Governor would no longer need a request from the chief executive officer of the jurisdiction, the

Governor could limit the extension to certain classes or categories of persons, the Governor would specify the end date of the extension (currently it ends when the disaster order is ended, but this law would permit extensions beyond that date), and a clarification that this order applies to school districts. This is intended to provide greater flexibility for the Governor to use this power as well as save the state resources.

S.2770 by Senator Adams: This bill inserts language into the Civil Service Law granting additional credit to those members of the military who served in a presidentially designated combat zone following Operation Iraqi Freedom after March 20, 2003. They will be provided an additional 5 points towards qualifying for Civil Service positions, enabling our returning veterans from Iraq a better opportunity to obtain employment with the State of New York (a more than appropriate benefit for these brave men and women).

In addition, the meeting heard Director James McDonough of the New York State Division of Veterans Affairs describe current initiatives to assist and support veterans. Director McDonough spoke about programs that affect veterans returning from Iraq and Afghanistan as well as our New York State veterans of previous wars, from World War II through the first Gulf War.

All three bills were successfully voted out of Committee, with S. 2644 and S.103 reported to the Finance Committee and S.2770 reported to the Codes Committee. The next meeting of the Veterans, Homeland Security and Military Affairs Committee will be March 17, 2009.