



NEW YORK STATE SENATOR

James L. Seward

## Senate Passes Package Of Bills To Assist Veterans

JAMES L. SEWARD June 12, 2013

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**ALBANY, 06/12/13 --** State Senator James L. Seward (R/C/I – Oneonta) today announced senate passage of a package of legislation to help New York’s military veterans achieve success in business, employment and education. A bill sponsored by Senator Seward ([S.3572](#)) that would exempt veterans organizations from paying taxes on heating fuel was part of the package.

**“Veterans groups do a great deal for their members and communities, removing a layer of bureaucracy and saving them a few dollars is the least we can do,”** said Senator Seward. **“My bill would provide veterans groups with the same exemption that is given to religious and charitable organizations.”**

Currently, religious and charitable organizations are exempt from paying tax on non-highway diesel motor fuel used for heating purposes. However, veteran’s organizations are required to pay the tax up-front and apply for a refund.

**“For veteran organizations, which are primarily run by volunteers, this is a burdensome process and often leads to months of waiting to receive their refunds,”** Seward added.

The senate also passed the Veterans Employment Act ([S.5504A](#)), co-sponsored by Senator Seward, that would grant veterans the right to temporary appointments by state agencies, rather than using temporary employment service companies.

**“New York continually uses temporary employees to supplement the state workforce for extended vacations, maternity leaves and the like. Tapping veterans first to fill such openings will help employ those who served our country while enhancing the state workforce by adding men and women with a sound background,”** Seward said.

Other bills approved by the senate include:

- **S.1978** that allows for any person who is serving or has served in active duty of the United States military to be considered a New York resident for the purpose of paying in-state tuition rates at SUNY colleges and universities;
- **S.2803A** that would establish a program to provide state contract preferences for small businesses owned by service disabled veterans. The bill would mirror a highly successful program for federal contracting.

Earlier this year, the senate successfully fought to expand the PFC Joseph Dwyer Peer-to-Peer Veterans Counseling Program. The Dwyer Program provides peer-to-peer counseling between veterans who personally understand the effects of post traumatic stress disorder (PTSD) and traumatic brain injury (TBI).

In addition, the senate proposed and established in the state budget a new tax credit to any business that hires a veteran returning home from military service.