



NEW YORK STATE SENATOR

Kevin S. Parker

## Senator Kevin Parker Introduces College Credits for Veterans

KEVIN S. PARKER November 11, 2013

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**(Brooklyn, NY)** – On the eve of the national Veterans Day holiday observance on Monday, November 11, 2013, Senator Kevin Parker (D-21), announced he would be introducing the NY CARES Act (New York College Aid for Returning Empire State Service members). The bill requires New York’s public and private universities to accept military service for some college credit. Joining the five-term legislator were members of Black Veterans for Social

Justice; Ed Daniels, Chair, Incarcerated Veterans' Consortium; Donald Day, Vice Commander, Disabled American Veterans; Carrie Mobley, retired United States Army Sergeant First Class; Brett Scudder, President, NY Humanitarian & Community Advocates Network, and United States Army Sergeants Jeffrey Parker and Lesly Fontaine, Jr., of the 42<sup>nd</sup> Infantry Division, Staten Island.

"America is in the process of experiencing the largest number of returning service members since World War II, many of whom will seek to either re-establish or embark on their civilian careers. By providing an enhanced path into college, this bill recognizes their specialized training and experience, and months and years on foreign soil as equivalent to college credits," Senator Parker said.

"I am proud to sponsor this important piece of legislation awarding college credit to veterans for the intensive, hands on training they received during their service with the United States military. This bill will afford all soldiers the opportunity to choose their future path by continuing their education in a field they most desire. Our men and women of the military deserve nothing less than our respect and support as they ease back into civilian life," said Assemblyman Felix W. Ortiz, D-Brooklyn and Chair of the Assembly/Senate Puerto Rican and Hispanic Task Force and the Committee on Cities, the bill's Assembly sponsor.

"The NY CARES Act will be an important part of helping returning veterans to restart or jump-start their careers after serving overseas," said Mr. Job Mashariki, Founder of Black Veterans for Social Justice. "Veterans should be able to leverage their specialized skills into college credit, and this bill will make that happen."

"We are honored to be here with Senator Parker for this very important initiative the NY CARES Act that will bring a very important and needed resource to our service men and women today and tomorrow," said Brett Scudder of the SISFI and the NY Humanitarians

and Community Advocates Network. "Providing an accessible path for veterans to finish or begin their educational development will help our returning heroes play the same type of leadership role in New York's economy that they demonstrated while sacrificing for us overseas. We owe them this much," continued Mr. Scudder.

The post 9/11 G.I. Bill offers returning veterans education benefits including, but not limited to, up to 100% tuition and fee coverage, and the ability to transfer benefits to family members. It does not however convert specialized training and experience into college credits. Senator Parker's NY CARES bill would take the highly technical training modern service members are given, and create a method for their knowledge, experience and course work to qualify for credit when applying to or resuming college. The bill would also create a "bridge" program and a "one-stop" website to make applying military training/experience to college credit and majors easier.

"Although my colleague Assemblyman Ortiz is unfortunately not able to be here, I know he joins me in believing this simple truth: We have a responsibility to give back to our troops and veterans, in the same selfless manner they have given to us to maintain our freedom," Senator Parker concluded.

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### ***About Senator Kevin Parker***

Senator Kevin S. Parker is intimately familiar with the needs of his ethnically diverse Brooklyn community that consists of 318,000 constituents in Flatbush, East Flatbush, Midwood, Ditmas Park, Kensington, Windsor Terrace, and Park Slope. He is the Ranking Member of the Senate Committees on Energy and Telecommunications Committee and Alcoholism and Substance Abuse, Assistant Democratic Leader for Intergovernmental Affairs, and Chair of the Democratic Task Force on New Americans.