



NEW YORK STATE SENATOR

Joseph A. Griffo

Senator Griffo's Weekly Column #2: Helping Vets With Their School Taxes

JOSEPH A. GRIFFO January 9, 2012

| ISSUE: **MILITARY, TAXES, PROPERTY TAX, VETERANS, CONSTITUENTS CORNER**

We owe a great deal to the men and women of our armed services, as well as parents whose children were lost in the preservation of our freedom.

While state legislators recognize there are no perfect words or gestures to appropriately express our gratitude, we do try to recognize this sacrifice by making it easier for veterans to live and work in New York.

Veterans are already eligible for a 15 percent reduction in the assessed value of their property if they served during a time of war, as well as an additional 10 percent for those serving in combat zones and an additional exemption for those who suffer service-related disabilities. There is a similar exemption offered for those who served during the Cold War period as well as Gold Star parents – those who lost a child serving in the military.

Until now, that exemption has only applied to county, city, town and village taxes.

I was pleased to support a new law (S.1199), recently signed by Governor Cuomo, which extends that exemption to school district taxes.

It's my hope that school districts will opt in and offer this exemption. All that's required is a public hearing and a resolution. Education board members can also take an extra step and adopt a local law to include property owners that are Gold Star parents.

My staff is available to help any school representative or veteran who needs help getting this process started with their district. Please call us at (315) 793-9072 or e-mail me at griffo@nysenate.gov.

For more information on the different property tax exemptions already available to veterans for their municipal bills, please visit the State Department of Taxation and Finance's website at www.tax.ny.gov/pit/property/exemption/vetexempt.htm