



NEW YORK STATE SENATOR

Cecilia Tkaczyk

Canines Come to the Capitol to Support Tkaczyk's "K9 Vets Day" Bill

CECILIA TKACZYK March 13, 2014

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(ALBANY- 3-13-2014) To mark the 72nd anniversary of the creation of the US Army's K9 Corps, Senator Cecilia Tkaczyk brought together police and service dogs, trainers, handlers and law enforcement officials to call for the establishment of March 13 as "K-9 Veterans Appreciation Day."

“There are countless stories about Military and Police dogs knowingly putting themselves in the line of fire to protect their human partners,” **Senator Tkaczyk** said. “They have served as sentries and scouts, on search and rescue missions and to locate explosive devices and subdue the enemy. And they have provided great comfort and companionship to our soldiers. I think it is fitting that we honor them and recognize their devotion, loyalty and bravery.”

Senator Tkaczyk also noted that March 13 marks one year to the day that a deranged gunman killed four people and wounded two in Herkimer County. In the stand-off with law enforcement that followed, an FBI Canine named Ape was killed protecting his human partners.

Senator Tkaczyk was joined by **Albany County Sheriff Craig Apple** who said, "The K9 units in the Sheriff's office are incredibly intelligent, loyal and brave. They, and their counterparts in the Military have a long history of heroic actions. They would literally take a bullet for their handlers, and deserve recognition for their courage and devotion.”

Two Albany County Deputy Sheriffs and their K9 partners also attended the event, Deputy Sheriff Joseph Martel with his dog, Mo, and Deputy Sheriff Patrick Stollo, and his dog, George.

Montgomery County Deputy Sheriff Jason Nare and his dog Gaj came to the Capitol to show their support.

And State Trooper Kevin Grogan brought his K9 partner, Raz, who is trained in explosive detection and is a fundamental part of the security measures at the Empire State Plaza.

Also attending to support K9 Veterans were:

Bruce McWatters, An investigator with State Police who has trained dogs in the Air Force, worked at several veterinary hospitals and taught classes on how to investigate animal cruelty cases.

Linda Delong and her certified therapy dog, Brandi. Linda and Brandi do incredible volunteer work in the community, providing comfort and therapy to hospital patients, children who have special needs and others.

Pam Burns, and her dog, Brick. Pam and Brick help to train other dogs to ensure they are capable for Homeland Security duties. Pam is a member of the Albany Obedience Club, Albany Kennel Club, Liberty Working Dog Club, Doberman Pinscher Club of America and the United Doberman Club. She is a long time advocate of creating a K9 Veterans Day.

Senator Tkaczyk's legislation -- S06163 -- would establish March 13 each year as K9 Veterans Day. The bill is currently in the Committee on Veterans, Homeland Security and Military Affairs.

During World War I, dogs were used to carry messages through the very dangerous network of battlefield trenches. During World War II, "Dogs for Defense" was established by the American Kennel Club, which helped to train dogs for the Army.

More than 1,500 US military dogs served our country during the Korean War and more than 4,000 during the Vietnam War. And more than 500 dog teams have been deployed to Iraq and Afghanistan.