



NEW YORK STATE SENATOR

Kevin S. Parker

## Senator Parker, Legislators and Veterans Groups Advocate for Bill to Guarantee Veteran Amputees Latest Prosthetic Technology

KEVIN S. PARKER May 22, 2014

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(**Brooklyn, NY**) – Yesterday, Senator Kevin Parker joined Assemblyman Marcos A. Crespo and veterans groups advocate to announce their bill, A6820/S5390, which clarifies that amputee veterans who have lost a limb due to their military service, and who have private insurance to supplement their Veterans Administration benefits, cannot be denied replacement of their outdated artificial limbs when new and more advanced prosthetic technology is available.

With the national spotlight on serious problems plaguing the VA and the gross lack of quality care, the proposed law would help veteran amputees in New York State. The legislation introduced early in 2013 has received increased attention due to the reprehensible and potentially criminal treatment of veterans by the federal Veterans Administration.

"America is in the process of the largest demobilization of active duty service members since World War II, an event as transformational in its own way as the Baby Boomers Generation, which re-shaped America," said Senator Kevin Parker, State Senate sponsor of the measure. "The millions of veterans returning from Afghanistan and Iraq, and the tens of thousands of veterans returning to New York, bring with them unprecedented needs, such as the fact that 6% or more of them will likely require prosthetic devices. Our returning heroes sacrificed for us and our way of life, it is only right that we help them get the best possible prosthetics in turn, so they will be able to continue to play leadership roles in our state's communities, businesses and government without having to fight against mobility impairment."

According to Assemblyman Crespo, author of the legislation and member of the Assembly Standing Committee on Insurance, "With Memorial Day observances only days away, the need for concrete policies to help our veterans need to be enacted into law. All the flag waving and patriotic speeches will not fill the gap in health services our veterans need." He continued, "Recent news accounts and Congressional hearings on dozens of deaths of veterans due to delayed access to treatment and delays of close to a year to access their veteran's benefits is a national shame. Now that our federal government has failed our veterans, New York State has options available to mitigate the negative impact this situation is having on our disabled veterans."

According to Catherine R. Laporte, retired member of the U.S. Army and First Vice Chairman of the Fort Hamilton Military Retiree Council, "I am in full support of this legislation which will go a long way in guaranteeing state-of-the-art prosthetics to all military veterans who have suffered an amputation, without restrictions. As a service-connected disabled retiree, and in having direct interaction with groups of veterans that this bill is designed to help and protect, I support this legislation without reservation." She added, "This population of veterans has volunteered to protect and defend our nation and they and their families have made the ultimate sacrifice - we are responsible to help them achieve a better quality of life, so that they can continue to achieve with dignity."

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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.