



NEW YORK STATE SENATOR

William Larkin

## Senator Larkin and Assemblyman Tedisco Introduce Bill for New G.I.V.E Back Legislative Internship Program for Disabled Veterans

WILLIAM J. LARKIN JR. May 23, 2014

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### **Lawmakers seek first-in-the-nation set-aside program to enable service-disabled veterans to participate in annual state legislative internship program**

In advance of Memorial Day, New York State Senator Bill Larkin (R,C-Cornwall-on-Hudson), a World War II and Korean War combat veteran, and Assemblyman Jim Tedisco (R,C,I-Glenville) today introduced new legislation to create the G.I.V.E. Back NY program (Giving Internships for disabled Veterans not fully Employed) to enable disabled veterans to participate in the Assembly and Senate's annual legislative internship program.

Tedisco and Larkin's legislation (A.9774/S.7626) sets aside 10 percent of the current Assembly Session Internship and Senate Student program positions for service-disabled veterans to apply to be part of this first-in-the-nation pilot initiative.

"This unique program integrates serving your country with serving your state. G.I.V.E. Back NY will allow service-disabled veterans the opportunity to experience state government first-hand. For those veterans who participate, I hope it will stir an interest in making their voices heard at all levels of government. As someone who has devoted his life to both the military and public service, I can tell you without hesitation that we need more people with military backgrounds working in all levels of government to ensure that the interests and needs of our veterans are not forgotten. This pilot program is an excellent way to do just that and I look forward to its passage," said Larkin.

"There's a phrase each of us frequently uses when we are appreciative, 'thanks for everything.' When it comes to our veterans, that's not a slogan, that's reality. They really have given us the ability to retain for us everything that we as Americans hold dear. All of

our freedoms and liberties and relative safety are due to the service and sacrifices of our veterans. Who better than our wounded warriors to see the inner workings of the republic and representative democracy they put their lives on the line for to the extent they now have to deal with a life-long disability,” said Tedisco.

“Given the dysfunction we’re seeing on the federal level with the care of our veterans coming out of Washington, D.C., G.I.V.E. Back NY sends the message that our state and the New York State Legislature truly values the service of our disabled veterans in deeds as well as words. As our disabled veterans learn about state government, my colleagues and I and our college interns will learn from them about honor, duty, courage, and perseverance, lessons that our leaders in state government probably need now, more than ever. This program will not only assist our disabled veterans financially, but provide them with significant experience to put on their resumes for future long-term employment,” said Tedisco.

This year, there were 120 interns in the Assembly Internship program, which was down from 180 interns in 2013. Currently, the Assembly Internship program is open to students matriculated in a four-year college. Undergraduates receive a \$4,500 annual stipend (\$6,500 for CUNY students) and graduate students earn \$11,500. It is budgeted at \$929,149 this fiscal year. The Senate Student Program is budgeted at \$752,323.

Larkin and Tedisco propose G.I.V.E. Back NY enrollees receive an \$11,500 stipend for the semester-long program. There’s no additional cost to taxpayers to implement G.I.V.E. Back NY.