



NEW YORK STATE SENATOR

Jack M. Martins

Senator Martins' Legislation to Help Homeless Veterans Passed by Senate

JACK M. MARTINS June 16, 2014

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Senator Jack M. Martins (R-Mineola) announced that legislation he sponsored to create a Homeless Veterans Assistance Fund to support military servicemen and women who need help with housing has been passed by the New York State Senate. The legislation (S4760A) allows New Yorkers to contribute to the fund when filing their personal income taxes.

"No one who risked their life serving our country should be forgotten when they return home. Every veteran deserves proper access to whatever care and services they need. Enabling residents to donate to this new fund to help homeless veterans is another way to ensure we support our American heroes in their time of need. I thank my colleagues for supporting this legislation," said Senator Martins.

This measure creates the Homeless Veterans Assistance Fund to assist and care for homeless veterans with housing and housing-related expenses, as determined by the New York State Department of Veterans Affairs. To facilitate contributions, the fund would have a place on the state's personal income tax return. New Yorkers electing to support the fund can make contributions in any dollar amount.

The U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs estimated that there were over 57,000 homeless veterans on a single night in January 2013 in the United States. The V.A. lists a number of factors leading to veterans becoming homeless, including poverty, lack of support from family or friends, substance use, or mental health challenges that may develop or worsen as a result of trauma they experience while serving.

“When veterans return home from serving our country, the least we can do is provide them support when they need it the most. Turning our backs to them is no way to show our gratitude and appreciation. Senator Martins’ legislation is the right and honorable thing to do to serve those who served us,” said Mineola American Legion Commander Carl Marchese.

“This is critically important to help the over 5,000 homeless veterans on Long Island, and the thousands of others throughout New York State. This is a priority for veterans, and we appreciate Senator Martins’ leadership on this issue,” said Frank Colon, Past President of the United Veterans Organization of Nassau County and Past-Commander of the Nassau County American Legion.

The bill has also passed the Assembly and will be sent to the Governor for consideration.