



NEW YORK STATE SENATOR

William Larkin

## Larkin, Paulin Tout Inclusion Of Veterans' Equality Act In Senate And Assembly Budget Resolutions

[WILLIAM LARKIN](#) March 14, 2016

Senator Bill Larkin (R-39<sup>th</sup>) and Assemblywoman Amy Paulin (D-88th) are proud to announce that the Senate and Assembly's one-house budget resolutions contain the Veterans' Equality Act.

This legislation would allow all honorably discharged veterans who are members of a New York State retirement system to purchase service credit for up to three years of military service performed. Under current law, only veterans who served during certain specified periods of war are eligible for this benefit, excluding a substantial number of veterans, such as those who have served recently in Afghanistan.

"Giving all veterans the ability to improve their retirement to assure a greater financial security for themselves and their loved ones is a small price to pay for the sacrifices they have made for their nation," said Larkin. "It is outrageous that our Afghanistan veterans and those who have fought in other recent conflicts are not eligible for this military service credit in New York State under current law."

"I am pleased that the Senate and Assembly worked together in a bipartisan manner to include this important provision in each of the one-house budget resolutions," added Larkin.

"A veteran's selfless service, not their tour of duty, should be the basis for earning this

important credit.”

“All veterans who served our country deserve our ultimate respect and thanks, regardless of when or where they happened to serve,” Paulin said. “To hold these benefits back from so many veterans is an insult to the sacrifices that all servicemen and women have made.”

“The Veterans’ Equality Act is about appreciation for all our veterans who have served our country and served in our communities throughout New York State,” said Anthony Zebrowski. Zebrowski is a Marine Corp Veteran, former NYPD Officer and 9/11 first responder, current member of the Air National Guard 105<sup>th</sup> Airlift Wing and an officer of the Town of Newburgh Police Department. “When we deployed during Operation Enduring Freedom, we did so out of duty not because we wanted something in return. The men and women I served with, as well as combat veterans who served before us, including Col. Larkin, understand that this bill is needed to honor the sacrifices of all who served.”

The Veterans’ Equality Act will now be negotiated for inclusion in the final state budget, which is expected to be voted on later this month to meet the April 1<sup>st</sup> deadline.