



NEW YORK STATE SENATOR

Joseph P. Addabbo Jr.

## Addabbo Applauds Senate Passage of Bills to Help Service-Disabled Veterans

JOSEPH P. ADDABBO JR. March 1, 2016

| ISSUE: **VETERANS**

Howard Beach, NY (March 1, 2016) NYS Senator Joseph P. Addabbo, Jr. is supporting the recent Senate passage of two bills to aid service-disabled veterans in New York State – one to provide greater affordable housing options for veterans who became disabled in the line of duty, and a second to better track the success of programs designed to help injured veterans gain access to lucrative state contracting opportunities.

“Our service-disabled veterans have made tremendous personal and painful sacrifices to protect and serve all of us in the armed forces,” said Addabbo, the ranking member of the Senate Committee on Veterans, Homeland Security and Military Affairs. “When they come home from their tours of duty, it is our obligation to ensure that our wounded warriors are able to live comfortably and safely, and to effectively participate in our state’s economy. These bills are designed to help us keep these promises to our servicemen and women who were injured on our behalf.”

The first bill (S.3969), which was approved with Addabbo’s support, would provide preferences for service-disabled veterans under New York’s Affordable Home Ownership Development Program. Specifically, when financing is provided under this program to develop affordable housing, the ability of the project to serve homebuyers who are service-

disabled veterans would be taken into consideration. Eligible veteran homebuyers would be those with a federal Veterans' Administration disability rating of 40 percent or higher. Right now, the Affordable Home Ownership Development Program is targeted to the lowest income households in a particular area, with no regard to service-disabled veteran status.

The second piece of legislation (S.6365) would increase the amount of information state agencies must provide regarding their implementation of the Service Disabled Veteran-Owned Business Act, which was enacted in 2014 and co-sponsored by Addabbo. Under this two-year-old law, state agencies must attempt to provide six percent of their contracts for goods and services to companies owned by veterans who became disabled as a result of their military service. The bill recently passed by the Senate would require that state agencies disclose information about the percentage of contracts they have been able to award under the program, and create a website to disclose these statistics to the public.

"Both of these bills represent good steps toward ensuring our disabled veterans a decent quality of life where they can afford housing and promote their businesses in New York State," said Addabbo. "I hope our colleagues in the State Assembly will also consider these important initiatives over the course of the 2016 legislative session."

Having passed the Senate, the bills are now being reviewed by the Assembly committees on housing and veterans' affairs.