



NEW YORK STATE SENATOR

John J. Bonacic

## Senate Passes Measures to Improve Lives of Veterans and Honors their Service with Annual "Hall of Fame" Celebration

JOHN J. BONACIC May 25, 2016

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(Albany, NY)-The New York State Senate this week passed seven measures dedicated to improving the lives of veterans in honor of their service to the state and country. The Senate also celebrated the achievements of veterans from across the state during the Senate's annual Veterans' Hall of Fame induction ceremony.

“It’s fitting that during a week in which we pause to honor brave men and women from across the state at the ‘Hall of Fame’ celebration, the Senate renews our commitment to them, and other veterans, by passing these bills,” said Senator Bonacic. “I was pleased to support all of these measures.”

The New York State Senate Veterans’ Hall of Fame was created to honor and recognize outstanding veterans from the Empire State who have distinguished themselves both in military and civilian life. Information about the lives of more than 50 veterans inducted into the Hall of Fame today is posted at <http://www.nysenate.gov/initiative/honoring-our-veterans>.

Legislation passed this week includes:

**S6577A** which allows New York State income tax filers to contribute to the Veterans’ Home Assistance Fund;

**S2245C** which gives school districts the option to offer real property tax exemptions to eligible veterans;

**S1200A** provides an increase in the rates of annuities payable to veterans and surviving spouses of veterans from \$1,000 to \$1,500;

**S3408** allows any veteran who has served this nation to be awarded a high school degree based on their knowledge and experience gained while in service;

**S2263** allows those with military service and honorable discharge to attend classes at the State University of New York (SUNY) and the City University of New York (CUNY) on a tuition-free audit basis; and

[S870](#) permits each county, city, town, or village to adopt a local law to authorize veterans who have not been discharged or released from a current, subsequent military service to receive an additional veteran real property owner tax exemption.

The Senate today also gave final passage to [S3137C](#) which requires the State Division of Veteran Affairs to maintain a fact sheet on their website containing contact information for all Veterans Integrated Service Networks in New York and for the U.S. Veterans Health Administration to help veterans better navigate the health care system.

All bills have been sent to the Assembly, except [S3137C](#), which will be sent to the Governor.