



NEW YORK STATE SENATOR

Joseph P. Addabbo Jr.

## Addabbo speaks on panel focused on veterans affairs

SENATOR JOSEPH P. ADDABBO, JR. July 17, 2018

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As the ranking member of the Senate Committee on Veterans, Homeland Security and Military Affairs, State Senator Joseph P. Addabbo, Jr. was invited to be a part of a panel at City & State's A Lifetime of Service: Honoring Veterans Who Make NY Better event on July 11.

The panel, moderated by Grace Segers, web reporter for City & State NY, also included Joel Evans, Executive Deputy Director for New York State Division of Veterans' Affairs;

Assemblyman Michael G. DenDekker, Chair of the Committee on Veterans' Affairs; and Councilman Chaim Deutsch, Chair of the Committee on Veterans.

Addabbo touted the success the Senate and Assembly had during this past session in Albany, with both houses passing seven bills focused on veterans' needs, which are currently awaiting the Governor's signature to be made into law.

One such bill (S.936-A), co-sponsored by Addabbo, would create a task force on veteran employment opportunities which would hold bi-annual public hearings and generate reports on recommendations and the development of methods to help veterans find and maintain employment as a way to combat the growing number of homeless veterans in the state.

Addabbo also helped to establish the Hire-a-Vet Tax Credit program, which provides a tax credit for employers who hire veterans for at least 35 hours a week for at least one year.

"In Albany, we put politics and party affiliations aside when it comes to veterans affairs," Addabbo said. "Being a Democrat or Republican doesn't matter when you are crafting legislation to help the brave men and women who enter the armed forces, and together we have done some amazing things for our veterans."

In the budget, over \$15 million has been allocated to veterans issues, including \$12.9 million for New York State Veterans Affairs, and \$500,000 for Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD) research, Addabbo noted.

"Although we have done a lot for our veterans, there is still more to be done," Addabbo said. "There were several bills that were left on the floor of the Senate and Assembly during this session, and we need to come back next year and make sure more of these important pieces of legislation are made into law."

One way to do more for veterans, Addabbo believes, is to be able to not only create initiatives and laws that help veterans, but to make sure that they are aware of all the benefits accessible to them throughout New York State.

“I believe that every day is Veterans Day and as elected officials it is our job to do more than just create programs that people can use,” he added. “We must make sure that those who can use these veterans programs know about them and have the access to benefit from the programs.”