



NEW YORK STATE SENATOR

Robert G. Ortt

Ortt, Hawley: It's Never Too Late to do What is Right

ROBERT G. ORTT April 17, 2019

| ISSUE: **GOLD STAR FAMILIES, VETERANS, HIGHER EDUCATION**

Today, **Senator Rob Ortt (R,C,I,Ref-North Tonawanda)** and **Assemblyman Steve Hawley (R,C,I-Batavia)** welcomed the news that access to public college scholarships for Gold Star families would be expanded. Ortt and Hawley previously sponsored legislation to broaden eligibility for Gold Star families, but Governor Cuomo announced that executive action would be taken through the state's Higher Education Service Corporation. Through this action, Gold Star families no longer have to wait for Democrats in the Legislature to pass legislation for this change to take effect.

"It is unfortunate that this is the path we had to take with Democrats in the Legislature failing to advance this common-sense legislation," said **Sen. Ortt**. "However, I am extremely pleased with this outcome. It has always been about doing whatever it takes to ensure that our Gold Star families are treated with the honor and dignity that they deserve. While Gov. Cuomo and I disagree on many issues, in this case, we both recognize that helping the families of our severely injured and deceased service members is something everyone should support."

"I am pleased that after years of carrying this bill in the Assembly and working with Republicans and Democrats, specifically Sen. Ortt, who championed this bill in his chamber, that we have finally fulfilled our obligation to Gold Star families," said **Assemblyman Steve**

Hawley. “This has never been a partisan issue but an issue of paying gratitude and awarding recognition for the tremendous sacrifices of our veterans and fallen heroes. I am pleased to see the MERIT Scholarship finally expanded for more military families and would like to thank Sen. Ortt for his efforts in getting this done.”

Last week, Assembly Democrats killed legislation that would have expanded access to public college scholarship funds for dependents of military service members severely injured or killed while in performance of their duties. In January, Senate Democrats voted against an amendment to expand this funding when the Senate voted for the DREAM Act, which expanded tuition assistance to illegal immigrants.

###

RELATED LEGISLATION

2019-S193

- Introduced

- ◦ In Committee Assembly
 - In Committee Senate

- ◦ On Floor Calendar Assembly
 - On Floor Calendar Senate

- ○ Passed Assembly
 - Passed Senate
- Delivered to Governor
- Signed By Governor
-

Provides free tuition expenses for dependent family members of N.Y. state military personnel

January 02, 2019

In Senate Committee [Veterans, Homeland Security and Military Affairs](#)

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Do you support this bill?