



NEW YORK STATE SENATOR

James L. Seward

## New Bill Would Exempt Volunteer First Responders from State Taxes

JEFF BISHOP, COMMUNICATIONS DIRECTOR May 20, 2019

| ISSUE: **VOLUNTEER FIREFIGHTERS, EMS**



**ALBANY, 05/20/19** – State Senator James L. Seward (R/C/I/Ref-Oneonta) today joined Assemblyman Chris Tague (R/C/I/Ref-Schoharie) to announce introduction of legislation to aid volunteer first responders. **The bill (S.5564/A.7655)** would give a full state income tax exemption to volunteer firefighters and EMS personnel.

Senator James L. Seward said, “During my time in the state senate I have worked closely with many EMS providers, both volunteer and career, on a number of important initiatives – new laws, grant opportunities, and recruitment efforts. This exemption would serve as a well-deserved thank you for the men and women who give freely of themselves to keep our communities safe. The legislation would also be a powerful recruitment tool to help boost our depleted volunteer EMS rolls.”

Assemblyman Chris Tague said, “I am very proud to introduce this legislation, our volunteer firefighters and EMS sacrifice so much for us. They miss birthdays, holidays, family dinners, football games, dance recitals, and thousands more that the rest of us take for granted, all so that when we dial 911 someone will be there for us. They’ve paid their due hundreds of times over and it’s time we gave back to them. Fire houses are closing; ambulance companies are being folded into larger county-spanning units to cover labor gaps. Giving these volunteers tax free status from state income taxes we can help shore up the volunteerism that is the lifeblood of these institutions. We owe it to them to ease their burden as much as we can. It’s a public safety issue, but it’s also about respect and our own peace of mind.”

To be eligible for the state income tax exemption, a volunteer must be in good standing with their respective organizations, have completed a minimum of one year of service, have fully completed all state mandated training courses, be certified by the chief emergency service coordinator of their county and have attended at least 55 percent of annual calls.

The legislation has been referred to the Senate Budget and Revenue Committee and the Assembly Ways and Means Committee.

## 2019-S5564

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- 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
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Relates to providing a state income tax exemption for volunteer firefighters and volunteer ambulance workers

May 07, 2019

In Senate Committee [Budget and Revenue](#)

Sponsored by [James L. Seward](#)

Do you support this bill?

NAY