



NEW YORK STATE SENATOR

Jen Metzger

State Senators Metzger and Skoufis Secure State Funding to Support Free Legal Services for Veterans and Military Families

JEN METZGER September 10, 2019

| ISSUE: **VETERANS AND MILITARY FAMILIES, LEGAL SERVICES OF THE HUDSON VALLEY, HUDSON VALLEY**



Goshen, NY... Senators Jen Metzger and James Skoufis joined Legal Services of the Hudson Valley (LSHV) CEO Barbara Finkelstein to announce \$200,000 in state funding to support the organization's Veterans and Military Families Advocacy Project (VMFAP), which provides free legal services. Metzger and Skoufis were instrumental in restoring the funding in this year's State Budget, following a proposed cut by the Governor.

"Our Veterans and their families have sacrificed so much, and Legal Services of the Hudson Valley has the experience to help them with the unique challenges that they may face, including navigating the Veterans Administration and other systems to make sure that they receive the benefits and assistance that they need and deserve," **said Senator Metzger.**

"This program handled more than 400 cases last year in Orange and Sullivan counties, alone, and I am pleased we were able to secure the necessary funding to ensure that this important work will continue."

"Legal Services of the Hudson Valley goes above and beyond to provide necessary civil services to our veteran community," **said Senator James Skoufis.** "I'm thrilled that Senator Metzger and I were able to successfully secure \$200,000 for LSHV's Veterans and Military Advocacy Project. No one should ever take legal advantage of our veterans and, with this funding, LSHV is there to make sure of it."

Veterans often face unique legal problems on their return from duty, and without the assistance of a trained attorney, many of them are unable to navigate the legal system on their own. LSHV's VMFAP was created in 2012 to fill this gap. The goal of the Project is to provide free legal advice and direct representation to veterans and their family members in civil (non-criminal) legal matters. LSHV's VMFAP fosters the successful reintegration of Veterans into the community by helping them access benefits and services that support their basic human needs such as housing, health, and safety, as well as with financial and employment challenges.

"Thanks to the efforts of Senator Skoufis and Senator Metzger, our Veterans and Military Families Advocacy Project can continue to provide free legal services to those who have served our country," **said Barbara Finkelstein, CEO of Legal Services of the Hudson Valley.**

"Because of their support, Legal Services of the Hudson Valley will be able to protect basic

human needs like housing, health care access, disability benefits and other critical legal matters for more than 1,000 veterans in Orange, Sullivan, and Rockland. We are so grateful to our elected officials for their support of our services, which are a lifeline for so many individuals and families in the Hudson Valley.”

LSHV is the only provider of free, comprehensive, civil legal services in the Hudson Valley.

Jen Metzger represents the 42nd Senate District, which includes all of Sullivan County and parts of Delaware, Orange, and Ulster Counties. Senator Metzger serves as Chair of the Agriculture Committee and sits on the Environmental Conservation, Education, Health, Energy and Telecommunications, Local Government, Women’s Issues, Domestic Animal Welfare, and Legislative Commission on Rural Resources Committees.

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