



MAIL CALL

CHAIRMAN STEVE STERN

COMMITTEE ON VETERANS' AFFAIRS

Issue 002

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A Message From Our Chairman

It has been my privilege to work closely with and for the brave men and women who have sacrificed so much to protect our great nation. I look forward to meeting with our veterans from across New York State, and as Chairman I remain committed to ensuring that our veterans in New York State always receive the recognition, support, and services that they deserve.



Contact Chairman Stern

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<https://nyassembly.gov/comm/?id=40>



Assemblyman Stern at the annual Veterans of Foreign Wars Legislative Breakfast in Albany, with Ann Marie Hogancamp of the VFW National Legislative Committee, John Wenig, VFW State Student Veterans Association Liaison, and William Hughes, Commander of VFW District 11 on Long Island.

Important Information from Chairman Stern

NYS Department of Veterans' Services	518-474-6114
Veterans Crisis Hotline	988, Press 1
VA Health Benefits Hotline	877-222-VETS
PACT Act Assistance	800-698-2411
VA Healthcare-Related Fraud, VHA Office of Integrity and Compliance Helpline	1-866-842-4357
VA Benefits Fraud Helpline	1-800-827-1000
Support for VGLI Program, SGLI Program, and FSGLI Claims	800-419-1473
Support for VA-Life, S-DVI, and VMLI	800-669-8477
Assistance with Education Benefits	888-442-4551
Caregiver Support Line	1-855-260-3274
VA Loan Guaranty Service	877-827-3702
Special Issue Hotline - Blue Water Navy Vietnam Veterans Act, Gulf War, Agent Orange, and other information	800-749-8387
National Call Center for Homeless Veterans	877-424-3838
MISSION Act	800-698-2411
Spina Bifida Health Care Benefits Program	833-930-0816
Civilian Health and Medical Program of the Department of Veterans Affairs, CHAMPVA	800-733-8387
Women Veterans Helpline	855-829-6636
Debt Management Center	800-827-0648
Health Resource Center (collection of medical and prescription debts)	866-400-1238
Paralyzed Veterans of America	212-807-3114
Veteran Text Crisis Line:	text 838255
Connect with a fellow combat Veteran about your experiences, 24 hours a day, 7 days a week:	1-877-927-8387; TTY:711

Important Information from Chairman Stern

VA Health Chat: This app allows veterans to chat with VA staff when they have a question about a non-life-threatening health issue, want to schedule a VA appointment or refill a VA prescription, and more: <https://mobile.va.gov/app/va-health-chat>

VA Health and Benefits: Download the VA Health and Benefits mobile app to manage VA health care, benefits and payments from a mobile phone or tablet: <https://mobile.va.gov/app/va-health-and-benefits>

VA Video Connect: An app to help Veterans and their caregivers quickly and easily meet with VA health care providers through live video on any computer or mobile device with an internet connection: <https://mobile.va.gov/app/va-video-connect>

Schedule an online consultation with a NYS Veterans Services Agency Benefits Advisor: <https://veterans.ny.gov>

Find your local NYS Veterans Services Office: <https://veterans.ny.gov/office-locations>

Find your local NYS Disabled Veterans' Outreach Program Specialists: <https://dol.ny.gov/services-veterans>

Property Tax Exemptions for Veterans: <https://veterans.ny.gov/property-tax-exemptions-veterans>

Health and Disability Benefits for Families and Caregivers: <https://www.va.gov/family-and-caregiver-benefits/health-and-disability/>

Apply for a Veterans Status Designation on a NYS Photo ID: <https://dmv.ny.gov/more-info/veteran-status-designation-on-a-photo-document>

Homes for Veterans Program: <https://veterans.ny.gov/homes-veterans-program>

Gold Star Annuity Program: <https://veterans.ny.gov/gold-star-parent-annuity-program>

New York State Blind Annuity Program: <https://veterans.ny.gov/new-york-state-blind-annuity-program>

Benefits for Certain Children of Vietnam War Veterans who served in areas where Agent Orange and other chemicals were used: <https://veterans.ny.gov/benefits-certain-children-vietnam-war-veterans>

New York State Veterans' Nursing Homes: <https://veterans.ny.gov/new-york-state-veterans-nursing-homes>

Find Your Local Vet Center: <https://www.va.gov/find-locations/>

Lifetime Liberty Pass: <https://veterans.ny.gov/lifetime-liberty-pass>

Non-Service-Connected Pension: <https://veterans.ny.gov/non-service-connected-pension>

Joseph P. Dwyer Peer Support Project

Founded in memory of Private First Class Joseph P. Dwyer, a combat medic in Iraq who struggled with PTSD, their mission is to advocate for safe, non-clinical environments where veterans can connect, share their experiences, and find healing through the support of their peers. This peer-driven approach helps veterans and their families navigate the challenges of civilian life, from mental health struggles to reintegration into their communities.



New York State's Joseph P. Dwyer Veteran Peer Support Programs

Connection. Community. Support.

**Explore Support Programs for
Veterans, Families & Caregivers**

Visit: www.JosephPDwyerPeerProject.org

This is the official website for all Dwyer Programs in New York State.

✧ What You'll Find on the Site:

- ✓ An interactive map of every Dwyer Program by county
- ✓ Upcoming events, meetups, and Veteran activities
- ✓ Peer support info for Veterans, families, and caregivers
- ✓ Resources for mental health, benefits, and reintegration
- ✓ Contact details to reach local program coordinators

👤 Who Is It For?

- ✓ Veterans from all service branches
- ✓ Active Duty, National Guard & Reservists
- ✓ Family members and caregivers



Website powered by



Scan the QR code or visit:
www.JosephPDwyerPeerProject.org

Valentines for Veterans

Assemblyman Stern collected Valentines from Second Grade students and the Student Council at Countrywood Primary Center to deliver to veterans at the Long Island State Veterans Home (LISVH) during the Valentine's Day Love Song Sing-Along program with LISVH Executive Director, Mr. Fred Sganga.



NYS Department of Veterans' Services Claims Assistance



NYS Department of Veterans' Services (DVS) provides free benefits advising. Experienced and dedicated Veterans Benefits Advisors, who are also veterans, work in a network of field offices across the state to assist Veterans and their spouses, children, and parents.

Veterans Benefits Advisors can help complete applications, obtain necessary documentation, and file claims for a broad spectrum of federal, state, local, and private Veterans' benefits. They can also follow up on correspondence and appeal an unfavorable ruling.

Common claims that Veterans Benefits Advisors assist with include:

- Disability Compensation
- Non-Service Connected Pension
- Dependency and Indemnity Compensation
- Special Monthly Compensation (SMC)
- Pre-Discharge Claim

To learn more about Claims Assistance available through DVS, please visit: <https://veterans.ny.gov/claims-assistance>

To speak with a Veterans Benefits Advisor:

- Call 518-474-6114 to book an appointment and learn more information
- Schedule a phone or video consultation online, at <https://veterans.ny.gov/>
- Find a Services Office near you: <https://veterans.ny.gov/office-locations>

At United Veterans Beacon House we are committed to providing personalized, supportive care for our veteran clients.

United Veterans Beacon House is a 501(c)(3) non-profit headquartered in Bay Shore, New York. Each year our dedicated staff helps more than 1,250 veterans, through our housing program and community-based supportive programs.

Programs and Services:

- Emergency & transitional housing assists single males & single females.
- Permanent housing serves single males and veterans with families.
- Permanent housing for persons living with HIV/AIDS through the HOPWA program.
- Assistance with service & non-service connected benefits
- Nutritional assistance
- Pro bono legal services
- Transportation
- Job readiness & search
- Rental & utility arrears assistance
- Thrift shop
- Holiday meals & gift assistance
- Referrals to health care services

To learn if you're eligible, please call UVBH HQ at **631.665.1571** or scan this QR code.



CONTACT US:

631.665.1571 ● info@uvbh.com ● www.uvbh.org
1715 Union Blvd., Bay Shore, NY 11706

Veterans Peer Support Project

**Third Monday of Each Month
12 PM–2 PM**

Half Hollow Hills Community Library

55 Vanderbilt Parkway, Dix Hills, NY 11746

hhhllibrary.org | 631-421-4530

Stop by and speak with a peer mentor to learn about free programs and services for Long Island Veterans of all eras. Light refreshments will be available. No registration required. Open to all.



Joseph P. Dwyer Project

LEGAL SERVICES

**Legal Services
of Long Island**

Long Island
State Veterans Home
AT STONY BROOK UNIVERSITY

**Long Island State
Veterans Home**



**Suffolk County Veterans
Services Agency**



**Long Island Cares
Inc. The Harry
Chapin Food Bank**



**United Veterans
Beacon House**

**IMAGINE
HALF HOLLOW HILLS
COMMUNITY LIBRARY**



Veterans' Affairs Committee Updates

Bills Voted Out of Committee as of 1-28-2026

A9490, STERN

Chapter 666 of the Laws of 2025 requires DVS to provide information on its website about volunteer opportunities for veterans to serve as volunteer firefighters or EMS providers. This chapter amendment clarifies the information that DVS would be required to post, while maintaining the reason for the legislation - allowing veterans to use their skills to help communities.

SIGNED INTO LAW 2-13-2026

A9489, STERN

This bill would amend Chapter 677 of the Laws of 2025, which established a real property tax exemption for servicemembers performing active duty in a combat zone, to make technical changes and clarify the criteria for eligibility, to facilitate implementation.

PASSED ASSEMBLY 2-25-2026

A3397A, RAGA

This legislation would facilitate additional entries on the New York State Veterans Memorial Registry. This legislation will help make steps toward creating a more exhaustive list of all veteran memorials and monuments in New York State, resulting in the honoring of veterans, the education of the public, and the promotion of tourism.

PASSED ASSEMBLY 2-03-2026



To view our digital newsletter, with all embedded links, please scan the QR code below:

