

1532--A

2009-2010 Regular Sessions

I N A S S E M B L Y

(PREFILED)

January 7, 2009

Introduced by M. of A. COLTON, PHEFFER, CHRISTENSEN, J. RIVERA, SCHROEDER, ALFANO, ABBATE, LUPARDO -- Multi-Sponsored by -- M. of A. BALL, BARRA, JOHN, SCARBOROUGH, SWEENEY, TOWNS, WEISENBERG -- read once and referred to the Committee on Veterans' Affairs -- committee discharged, bill amended, ordered reprinted as amended and recommitted to said committee

AN ACT to amend the executive law, in relation to a veteran speaker education program within the division of veterans' affairs

THE PEOPLE OF THE STATE OF NEW YORK, REPRESENTED IN SENATE AND ASSEMBLY, DO ENACT AS FOLLOWS:

1 Section 1. Legislative findings and intent. The legislature hereby
2 finds that the defining moments of our nation's history came in wartime,
3 especially during the great conflicts of the twentieth century. The
4 legislature further maintains that it is imperative that all of society,
5 and particularly young people, be aware of the contributions of those
6 who participated in these conflicts as members of the armed forces.
7 These men and women established a remarkable record of service and
8 sacrifice. They were ordinary men and women who did extraordinary things
9 to preserve and protect our nation and its cherished freedoms. Their
10 personal accounts, which constitute a valuable historical record, are in
11 danger of being lost forever as these individuals pass away. The legis-
12 lature, therefore, has determined that it is necessary and appropriate
13 to take steps to help encourage greater knowledge and appreciation of
14 veterans, particularly in our schools.
15 In this regard, many states have already enacted school-based programs
16 honoring those who served in the military. The legislature now finds
17 and declares that New York should make available to students, teachers
18 and administrators in public and private schools a new resource that
19 will encourage greater understanding and appreciation of the contribu-
20 tion of veterans.

EXPLANATION--Matter in *ITALICS* (underscored) is new; matter in brackets
[] is old law to be omitted.

1 S 2. The executive law is amended by adding a new section 353-a to
2 read as follows:

3 S 353-A. VETERAN SPEAKER EDUCATION PROGRAM. 1. THERE IS HEREBY ESTAB-
4 LISHED WITHIN THE DIVISION A VETERAN SPEAKER EDUCATION PROGRAM TO BE
5 DEVELOPED AND IMPLEMENTED BY THE DIRECTOR IN CONSULTATION WITH THE
6 DIRECTOR OF THE NEW YORK STATE MILITARY MUSEUM AND VETERANS RESOURCE
7 CENTER AND IN ACCORDANCE WITH THE PROVISIONS OF THIS SECTION. SUCH
8 PROGRAM SHALL PROVIDE SCHOOL DISTRICTS WITHIN THIS STATE WITH A LISTING
9 OF AVAILABLE VETERAN SPEAKERS WILLING TO VISIT CLASSROOMS FOR THE
10 PURPOSE OF DISCUSSING THEIR MILITARY EXPERIENCE.

11 2. THE DIVISION SHALL DEVELOP AN INFORMATIONAL PAMPHLET TO BE DISTRIB-
12 UTED EITHER BY MAIL OR ELECTRONICALLY TO SCHOOL DISTRICTS WHICH PROVIDES
13 A GENERAL OVERVIEW OF THE PROGRAM INCLUDING ITS PURPOSE AND HOW TO
14 PARTICIPATE. THE DIVISION SHALL, FROM ITS AVAILABLE RESOURCES INCLUDING
15 ASSISTANCE FROM ORGANIZED VETERANS GROUPS, APPOINT AND CREATE A LISTING
16 OF VETERAN SPEAKERS COORDINATORS FOR EACH COUNTY OF THE STATE WHO SHALL
17 BE LISTED IN THE INFORMATIONAL PAMPHLET. THE VETERAN SPEAKERS COORDINA-
18 TORS' DUTIES SHALL INCLUDE BUT NOT BE LIMITED TO CONTACTING VETERANS WHO
19 RESIDE IN THEIR COUNTY INCLUDING THOSE WHO HAVE PARTICIPATED IN THE
20 VETERAN'S ORAL HISTORY PROGRAM AT THE NEW YORK STATE MILITARY MUSEUM OR
21 THE WEST POINT ORAL HISTORY PROJECT OR THE VETERANS HISTORY PROJECT OF
22 THE AMERICAN FOLKLORE CENTER OR ANY SIMILAR ORAL HISTORY PROJECT WITH
23 INFORMATION ABOUT THIS PROGRAM AND INQUIRING AS TO WHETHER SUCH PERSONS
24 WOULD BE WILLING TO PARTICIPATE AS SPEAKERS OR IN ANY OTHER CAPACITY.
25 THE LISTING SHALL INCLUDE THE NAMES AND CONTACT INFORMATION FOR SUCH
26 VETERANS INCLUDING INFORMATION DESCRIBING THE TYPE OF MILITARY SERVICE
27 PERFORMED BY EACH SUCH PERSON, THE TIME AND LENGTH OF SERVICE, GEOGRAPH-
28 IC AREA OR AREAS WHERE SUCH PERSON SERVED AND RANK. THE DIVISION AND THE
29 VETERAN SPEAKERS COORDINATORS SHALL ANNUALLY UPDATE SUCH INFORMATION
30 REGARDING THE AVAILABILITY OF SUCH VETERANS.

31 3. NO TEACHER OR VETERAN SHALL BE REQUIRED TO PARTICIPATE IN THIS
32 PROGRAM. ANY TEACHER WHO WISHES TO SUPPLEMENT HIS OR HER CLASSROOM
33 INSTRUCTION CONCERNING A PARTICULAR ERA IN AMERICAN MILITARY HISTORY MAY
34 CONTACT A PARTICIPATING VETERAN PERSONALLY TO REQUEST THAT SUCH PERSON
35 VISIT A CLASSROOM TO DISCUSS HIS OR HER MILITARY EXPERIENCE. A TEACHER
36 SHALL BE RESPONSIBLE FOR ASCERTAINING THE APPROPRIATENESS OF ANY
37 PROPOSED SPEAKER BASED UPON THE AGE OF THE CHILDREN AND THE INTENDED
38 SUBJECT MATTER. NOTHING IN THIS SECTION SHALL BE INTENDED TO SUPERSEDE
39 ANY PARTICULAR OR GENERAL SCHOOL RULES OR REGULATIONS OR OTHER LAWS
40 RELATING TO CURRICULUM.

41 4. THE DIVISION SHALL REQUIRE A CERTIFIED COPY OF THE VETERAN'S
42 DISCHARGE PAPERS TO PARTICIPATE IN THE VETERAN SPEAKER PROGRAM. SUCH
43 FORM SHALL BE FILED WITH THE DIVISION TO SERVE AS EVIDENCE THAT SUCH
44 PERSON IS A VETERAN WHO SERVED IN THE UNITED STATES MILITARY HONORABLY.

45 5. THE DIVISION SHALL IMPLEMENT A PROCEDURE FOR EVALUATIONS OF EACH
46 SPEAKER TO BE COMPLETED BY TEACHERS AND STUDENTS, AND MAINTAIN SUCH
47 EVALUATIONS AND MAKE THEM AVAILABLE UPON REQUEST TO OTHER TEACHERS WHO
48 PLAN TO PARTICIPATE.

49 6. THE DIVISION MAY CONSULT WITH OTHER VETERANS ORGANIZATIONS AND ANY
50 BRANCH OF THE U.S. MILITARY IN THE DEVELOPMENT OF THIS PROGRAM.

51 S 3. This act shall take effect one year after it shall have become a
52 law, provided that any rules and regulations necessary for the implemen-
53 tation of this act on its effective date shall be promulgated on or
54 before such date.