STATE OF NEW YORK

10496

IN SENATE

May 15, 2026

Introduced by Sen. BOTTCHER -- read twice and ordered printed, and when printed to be committed to the Committee on Cultural Affairs, Tourism, Parks and Recreation

AN ACT to amend the parks, recreation and historic preservation law, in relation to granting certain first responders free use of state parks and campsites

The People of the State of New York, represented in Senate and Assembly, do enact as follows:

Section 1. Short title. This act shall be known and may be cited as the "heroes park pass act".

§ 2. Subdivision 1 of section 13.19 of the parks, recreation and historic preservation law, as amended by chapter 616 of the laws of 2023, is amended to read as follows:

1. Notwithstanding the provisions of any other law, any person who is**:** blind, non-ambulatory, or an amputee [~~**or any**~~]**; a** veteran or member of a Gold Star family**; or a resident of New York state who is a retired first responder that served a county, town, city, village or the state,** shall be permitted to use any of the public campsites, parks and other public places of recreation in this state, upon the same terms and conditions as apply to the general public, but without the payment of any fees or other charges for the use of such campsites, parks and other public places of recreation.

§ 3. Subdivision 2 of section 13.19 of the parks, recreation and historic preservation law is amended by chapter 103 of the laws of 2024, is amended to read as follows

2. For the purposes of this section (a) "veteran" shall mean a resident of this state who is: (i) a veteran as such term is defined in section one of the veterans' services law; or (ii) a person who has served on active duty for the state as a member of the state organized militia as defined in subdivision nine of section one of the military law and who was discharged or released therefrom under conditions other than dishonorable; or (iii) a person who has served on active duty in the uniformed services of the United States or on active duty for the state as a member of the organized militia and has a qualifying condi-

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

LBD13661-04-6

tion, as defined in section one of the veterans' services law, and has received a discharge other than bad conduct or dishonorable from such service, or is a discharged LGBT veteran, as defined in section one of the veterans' services law, and has received a discharge other than bad conduct or dishonorable from such service; [~~and~~]

(b) "member of a Gold Star family" shall mean a resident of this state who is a gold star parent as defined in section twenty-six of the veterans' services law, the spouse or domestic partner, or the biological, step, or legally adopted minor child of a veteran whose death qualified the parent for an annuity[~~.~~]; and

(c) "first responder" shall mean a firefighter, law enforcement officer, paramedic, emergency medical technician, emergency services dispatcher, or other individual, whether compensated or not who, in the course of their professional or volunteer duties, responds to fire, medical, hazardous material, or other similar emergencies.

§ 4. This act shall take effect immediately.