

STATE OF NEW YORK

8493

2025-2026 Regular Sessions

IN SENATE

August 29, 2025

Introduced by Sen. LIU -- read twice and ordered printed, and when printed to be committed to the Committee on Rules

AN ACT in relation to providing a World War II service bonus for certain veterans

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

1 Section 1. Legislative intent. The legislature finds that many New
2 York residents served honorably in the armed forces of the United States
3 after September 2, 1945, the date recognized in the New York State
4 Constitution for the purposes of the World War II service bonus, but
5 before the cutoff date of December 31, 1946 for World War II veteran
6 status as recognized by the federal government. Due to this discrepancy,
7 there are many service members who were conferred WWII Veteran status
8 and benefits by the federal government, but not by the state of New
9 York. It is the intent of this legislature to fully honor these unrecognized
10 individuals, or their next of kin, under terms similar to those
11 provided in section 18 of Article VII of the New York State Constitution
12 to honor their service to the United States and the state of New York by
13 means of a bonus similar to what was provided under section 18 of Article
14 VII of the New York State Constitution. The bonus would go a long
15 way in acknowledging the inequity these veterans faced, restoring parity
16 with their fellow service members, and offering a lasting expression of
17 gratitude from the people of New York.

18 § 2. 1. Definitions. For the purposes of this act:

19 (a) "Qualifying Member of the Armed Forces" shall mean members of the
20 Army, Navy, Marine Corps, Coast Guard, Army Air Forces, Merchant Marines
21 of the United States as well as members of the public health service or
22 coast and geodetic survey while engaged in active service with the armed
23 forces of the United States, including the Army, Navy, Marine Corps or
24 Coast Guard, who did not receive a bonus pursuant to Chapter 547 of the
25 laws of 1947.

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

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1 (b) "Qualifying service" means active duty with the armed forces of
2 the United States at any time during the period beginning December 7,
3 1941 and ending December 31, 1946, and separation or discharge under
4 honorable conditions.

5 (c) "Resident" means an individual who was a resident of New York
6 state for a period of at least six months as of December 31, 1946.

7 (d) "Next of Kin" means the lawful surviving spouse, child, parent or
8 sibling of the member of the armed forces, in that order of precedence.

9 2. Bonus eligibility. A bonus of \$250 shall be paid to surviving qual-
10 ifying members of the armed forces who performed a qualifying service
11 and was a resident of New York state prior to their enlistment,
12 induction, or call to active duty. The next of kin of any qualifying
13 member of the armed forces shall be entitled to such bonus if such
14 member:

15 (a) performed a qualifying service and was a resident of New York
16 state prior to their enlistment, induction, or call to active duty and
17 died after their separation or discharge under honorable conditions; and

18 (b) was a resident of New York state prior to their enlistment,
19 induction, or call to active duty and died while on active duty during
20 the period December 7, 1941 and ending December 31, 1946.

21 3. Administration. (a) The Department of Veterans' Services is desig-
22 nated as the agency to receive, examine and pay bonus claims filed here-
23 under, and the New York State Commissioner of Veterans' Services is
24 authorized to adopt rules and regulations to perform such duties and
25 functions as may be necessary for the proper administration of this act,
26 including the establishment of a "WWII Veterans' Equity bonus fund".
27 Funding for the bonus shall come from existing funds, not otherwise
28 obligated, of the Department of Veterans' Services.

29 (b) The Department of Veterans' Services shall assist persons entitled
30 to any bonus in the preparation of claims and all agencies of the state
31 shall cooperate with the commissioner to effectuate the provisions of
32 this act.

33 (c) Applications for such bonus shall be accepted for 5 years from the
34 effective date of this act, and no bonus payment shall be made on appli-
35 cations filed subsequent to such date by any person, unless such person
36 can show that they were incapable of making such application prior to
37 such date because of physical or mental incapacity.

38 § 3. This act shall take effect immediately.