

BILL TEXT:

STATE OF NEW YORK

6574

2007-2008 Regular Sessions

IN ASSEMBLY

March 13, 2007

Introduced by M. of A. TOWNS, COLTON, LAFAYETTE, SCHROEDER,
WALKER --
Multi-Sponsored by -- M. of A. ALFANO, BURLING, CALHOUN,
CROUCH,
D. GORDON, JOHN, PEOPLES, PHEFFER, SWEENEY -- read once and
referred
to the Committee on Veterans' Affairs

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 Assem-**
bly, 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 and
17 declares that New York should make available to students,
teachers, and
18 administrators in public and private schools a new resource
that will
19 encourage greater understanding and appreciation of the
contribution of
20 veterans.
21 § 2. The executive law is amended by adding a new section
353-a to
22 read as follows:

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

LBD06893-02-7

A. 6574

2

1 § 353-a. Veteran speaker education program. 1. There is
2 hereby estab-
3 lished within the division a veteran speaker education
4 program to be
5 developed and implemented by the director in accordance
6 with the
7 provisions of this section. Such program shall provide
8 teachers in
9 public and private elementary and secondary schools within
10 this state
11 with a listing of available veteran speakers willing to visit
12 classrooms
13 for the purpose of discussing their military experience.
14 2. The division shall develop an informational
15 pamphlet, to be
16 distributed to school districts, which provides a general
17 overview of
18 the program including its purpose and how to participate. The
19 division
20 shall, from its available resources, including assistance from
21 organized
22 veterans groups, contact veterans living in this state with
23 information
24 concerning this program and inquire as to whether or not such
25 persons

14 would be interested and available to participate as speakers
or in any
15 other capacity. The pamphlet shall contain a listing of
veterans, by
16 county of residence, who have expressed a willingness to
participate in
17 the program. The division may also include current military
personnel
18 who are willing to participate. In addition to the names
and contact
19 information for such veterans, the division shall include
information
20 describing the type of military service performed by each
such person,
21 including time and length of service, geographic area or
areas where
22 such person served, and rank. The division shall annually
update such
23 information regarding the availability of such veterans. All
information
24 may also be maintained online, in substantially the same
format as
25 provided by the pamphlet, for access by computer.
26 3. No teacher or veteran shall be required to
participate in this
27 program. Any teacher who wishes to supplement his or her
classroom
28 instruction concerning a particular era in American military
history may
29 contact a participating veteran personally to request that
such person
30 visit a classroom to discuss his or her military experience. A
teacher
31 shall be responsible for ascertaining the appropriateness
of any
32 proposed speaker based upon the age of the children and the
intended
33 subject matter. Nothing in this section shall be construed to
supersede
34 any particular or general school rules or regulations or
other regu-
35 lations or laws relating to curriculum.
36 4. The division shall establish and operate directly or by
contract an
37 identification system of those veterans or members of the
armed forces
38 participating in such program. This system shall include but
not be
39 limited to background checks on whether or not such participant
actually
40 serves or served in the United States armed forces.
Information regard-
41 ing veteran status and military service provided by the veteran
or mili-
42 tary personnel solely to implement the provisions of this
section shall

43 be exempt from disclosure for the purposes of articles six and
44 six-A of
45 the public officers law, and used only to assist the division
46 and teach-
47 ers in making assessments to determine the status of
48 individuals partic-
49 ipating in such program.
50 5. The division shall implement a procedure for evaluations
51 of each
52 speaker to be completed by teachers and maintain such
53 evaluations and
54 make them available upon request only to other teachers who
55 plan to
56 participate. Such evaluations shall for all other purposes
57 be exempt
58 from disclosure for the purposes of articles six and six-A of
59 the public
60 officers law.
61 6. The division may consult with other veterans organizations
62 and any
63 branch of the United States armed forces in the
64 development of this
65 program.
A. 6574 3

1 § 3. This act shall take effect immediately, provided
2 that the
3 pamphlet required to be distributed to school districts
4 pursuant to
5 section two of this act shall be made available by the first of
6 October
7 next succeeding the date on which this act shall have become
8 law, and
9 the addition, amendment and/or repeal of any rule or
10 regulation neces-
11 sary for the implementation of this act on its effective
12 date are
13 authorized and directed to be made and completed by such date.
