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to learn how*

ASSEMBLYMEMBER
Didi Barrett
Is Fighting for Our
Veterans and Their Families

ASSEMBLYMEMBER DIDI BARRETT:

Dear Neighbors,

It has been my great honor to chair the Assembly Veterans' Affairs Committee for the past four years. I am very proud of what we have accomplished to better support our veterans and military families.

The establishment of the first New York State Department of Veterans Services - the first newly created state department in over 50 years - will be a game changer for our veteran community with a state agency that is fully funded and equipped, and solely focused on addressing the problems facing veterans and their families. The new agency will be positioned to resolve the ongoing issues with veterans' programs that are scattered across dozens of separate state offices.

We have focused on destigmatizing veteran mental health and providing funding for peer-to-peer counseling and support programs; the Restoration of Honor Act, which extends the eligibility for state benefits to veterans who received a "less than honorable discharge" because of a qualifying condition, like post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD) and military sexual trauma (MST); and the Outdoor Rx program to reduce barriers that have prevented our veterans and their families from accessing the healing benefits of the great outdoors.

Thank you to all who have served and to your families and friends who have supported you.



Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Didi Barrett". The signature is fluid and cursive, written over a white background.

Didi Barrett
Chair of the Assembly Veterans'
Affairs Committee

Created the First NYS Department of Veterans' Services

The new Department of Veterans' Services will be headed by a **Commissioner who can champion and speak for our brave servicemen and women** at the highest levels of state government.

This Executive-Level Department will serve as **a one-stop shop for veterans and their families to more easily access the variety of benefits, programs and services available** to them - that they have earned!

A Department will be able to wholly **advocate for increased funding to fully support and expand the services New York State provides to veterans and their families** while integrating services into one navigable location for ease of access.



Real Results for Veterans and Their Families

Expanded the Dwyer Peer-to-Peer Veterans Support Program statewide: Provided \$7.7 million to expand the Dwyer Program, which offers counseling and support by veterans for veterans struggling with post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD) and other mental health challenges.

Expanded Military Enhanced Recognition, Incentive and Tribute (MERIT) scholarship program: Extended eligibility for the MERIT Scholarship, which provides funds for up to four years of full-time undergraduate education to more Gold Star Families, severely and permanently disabled veterans and their dependents, and dependents of service members deemed MIA.

Enacted the Restoration of Honor Act and Broadened Benefits: Extends the eligibility for state benefits to veterans who received a "less than honorable discharge" because of a qualifying condition, like post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD), military sexual trauma (MST), traumatic brain injury (TBI) or their sexual orientation.

Expanded work on the Outdoor Rx Act: Secured \$150,000 in funding for additional research to remove barriers that prevent veterans and their families from accessing our state parks and lands and the healing effects of the great outdoors.

Designated the New York Medal of Honor Highway: Named U.S. Route 20 as the "New York Medal of Honor Highway" in the state of New York, furthering the nationwide move for this transcontinental roadway to be a reminder of the brave service members who protected our great state and country.



ASSEMBLYMEMBER

Didi Barrett

Questions or concerns?
My office is here to help:
Assemblymember Didi Barrett

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