

## **MESSAGE FROM THE CHAIRMAN**

*Dear Friend,*

*The Assembly Committee on Governmental Employees has jurisdiction over proposals pertaining to civil service requirements and regulations (including the Taylor Law, ratifying state employee contracts, hearing procedures, and civil service lists) and to public pensions and the public pension system. A majority of the proposals pertain to pension systems.*

*While negotiations on the State budget and other legislative priorities continue, the Governmental Employees Committee has worked on and passed a number of legislative initiatives. They are highlighted in this newsletter.*

*You will find in this newsletter the Committee's dedication to working men and women through groundbreaking health care initiatives that protect health care for families across the state to maintaining much-needed services that we rely on every day.*

*I would like to thank all the Committee members and staff for their dedication and attention to the needs of our State's public employees. Additionally, I would like to thank the Public Employee Organizations, their representatives, and the many government officials whose input on legislation is invaluable.*

*If you have any questions or concerns about issues or legislation before the Committee, please do not hesitate to contact me.*



*Sincerely,*

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Peter J. Abbate Jr." in a cursive script.

*Peter Abbate, Jr.  
Chairman*

## **Important Numbers**

Metropolitan Transit Authority (MTA): Dial 511  
NYS Department of Labor (DOL): 888-4-NYSDOL (888-469-7365)  
NYS Workers Compensation Board: 877-632-4996  
Public Employees Relations Board (PERB): [perbinfo@perb.ny.gov](mailto:perbinfo@perb.ny.gov)  
Occupational Safety and Health Administration (OSHA): 1-800-321-OSHA (6742)

## **Assemblyman Peter Abbate's Offices**

**ALBANY OFFICE**  
Room 839, LOB  
Albany, NY 12248  
518-455-3053

**DISTRICT OFFICE**  
6604 17th Avenue  
Brooklyn, NY 11204  
718-236-1764

**DISTRICT OFFICE**  
6605 Fort Hamilton Parkway  
Brooklyn, NY 11219  
718-232-9565

## SAVING NEW YORK STATE TAXPAYER DOLLARS

Over the course of this legislative session, the Governmental Employees Committee has come up with proposals to save the taxpayers of New York State millions of dollars over the next few years. There have been discussions to reduce overtime while the State is in a hiring freeze and considerations of cutting back on hiring outside contractors in government agencies and on out-of state contractors for construction projects, as well as reestablishing in-house labor.

### *Overtime During a Hiring Freeze*

Since new employees cannot be hired during a freeze, maintaining New York State's vital services is dependent upon current employees filling in the gaps and responsibilities where, previously, there was another employee working by their side. The Committee is dedicated to finding beneficial ways to get permanent placement for temporary employees that will save taxpayer dollars in the near future.

### *Cutting Down Outsourcing of State Contracts*

Over the past ten years, there has been a resurgence of state contracts being outsourced to private contractors. The Committee is examining productive methods to restore most of this work in-house to public employees who have the knowledge and experience to get the job done. It is our hope that having this work done in-house will bring accountability and dependability back to the workplace on behalf of public employees and the taxpayers of this State.

### *Reducing Work Done by Out of State Contractors*

This year, the Committee took a careful look at work being done by out-of-state contractors. We studied agencies on an informational level and on the construction level. The ideas developed will improve accountability to the workforce and reassure taxpayers of this State that their monies are being dispersed for services done properly and completely so they are getting unsurpassed work for every tax dollar spent.



## SUPPORTING OUR TROOPS AND THEIR FAMILIES



This legislative session the Assembly has negotiated several initiatives that would provide much-needed benefits to our troops while they are away defending our freedom. Below is a modest initiative in recognition of their service.

**A.6974B / S.7839** – Currently, the Military Service Credit Law of 2000 permits active public employees who served in the military during only specified conflicts to purchase up to three years credit for their military service. This legislation will extend this opportunity to Veterans who were in the military and served their country during peace time as well. The United States now depends on a volunteer military more than ever. In order to encourage citizens to become a member of the military, New York State needs to recognize all Veterans by allowing them access to the Military Service Credit Buy Back Law.

## PROTECTION AND RETENTION OF OUR FIRST RESPONDERS

Over the course of this legislative session, several pieces of legislation were introduced that would protect and retain the individuals that our community relies on most; our police and fire personnel. In recognition of the role these individuals play in our society and the risks they take every day when they suit up for work; the New York State Assembly recognized the need for protection of our first responders. The ability to retain our Veteran force so they may teach incoming recruits life lessons they have learned, during their time on the job, is also of great importance. Below are two pieces of legislation that acknowledge this:

### *Extending Filing for Cancer Ailments – A.9541*

– Various cancers, as a result of exposures, are not immediately obvious and/or diagnosed. That being said, the Governmental Employees Committee believes it is necessary to extend the filing period for cancers experienced by firefighters from the present two-year time period after normal retirement to a five-year time period.



*Extending Much-Needed Care for Widows or Widowers of Our Fallen First Responders – A.8484A* – This bill will provide a modest 3% increase cost of living adjustment added to the monthly payout to the widows or widowers of our fallen first responders.

## CONTRACT UPDATE



This year saw the resolution of several contracts between the State and various bargaining units representing public employees. These contracts are both fair for the employees and fiscally sound for the State. The Legislature approved a series of bills to implement the contracts with the following negotiating units:

- Rent Regulation Services Unit (**A.10114**)
- United University Professionals (**A.10116**)

## PROPER TRAINING FOR OUR FIRST RESPONDERS



This year, the Committee passed A.9573. This bill would allow the fire department of the City of New York to provide at least 40 hours of field training and classroom instruction in building and construction codes and local city ordinances. The curriculum will benefit both the fire departments and the communities they serve by insuring a more knowledgeable and effective workforce of first responders who are up to date in terms of these readily-changing, high-tech codes and ordinances.

*News from the  
NYS Assembly Committee on*

## Governmental Employees

## WORLD TRADE CENTER RESCUE AND RECOVERY LEGISLATION

In 2004, the Legislature passed a law (Governor's Taskforce on 9/11 Health Issues) that would establish a presumptive disability retirement related to exposure to elements in connection with the World Trade Center tragedy of September 11, 2001. **(A.11684 of 2004)**

This year, the Legislature revisited this issue because it was determined that several groups of public employees were not covered under the original legislation. Under direction from the Governor's Taskforce on 9/11 Health Issues, the Assembly passed a bill that would reopen for a 90-day window the notice of participation for filing disability applications for those exposed to World Trade Center ailments. **(A.9562A)**

