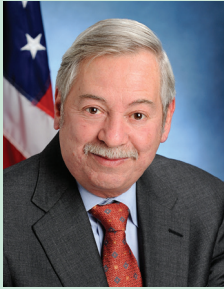


MESSAGE FROM THE CHAIRMAN



The Assembly Committee on Governmental Employees has jurisdiction over proposals pertaining to civil service requirements and regulations such as the Taylor Law, ratifying State employee contracts, hearing procedures and civil service lists, and public pensions and retirement systems. A majority of the proposals that pass through this Committee pertain to public pension systems.

While negotiations on 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 commitment to working men and women through ground breaking health care initiatives that protect healthcare for families across the state to maintaining much needed services that we rely on every day.

I would like to thank Speaker Heastie and 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 J. Abbate, Jr.
Chairman*

PROTECTING TAX PAYER DOLLARS THROUGH VALUABLE PENSION REFORM

During the 2018 legislative session the Assembly negotiated several initiatives that would provide much needed reform and technical correction to the State and Local retirement systems. Working on these technical issues is important to make sure our pension system is working for the benefit of everyone in our State.

Removal of the Pension Overtime Cap for MTA Employees – A.7599-A: This bill would remove a hard cap on annual overtime accruals in the calculation of a transit worker's pension under the special 25-Year/ Age 55 retirement plan. With the amount of increased work being done in the city to upgrade our public transportation systems, it is imperative that we maintain a workforce that is competent and has the ability to perform their jobs to the best of their ability and in the most cost-conscious way for our State agencies and localities.

Restructuring Investment Employee Rules and Regulations – A.3137: This bill would prohibit the use of placement agents by managers doing business with the common retirement fund. This initiative will continue to restore confidence in the integrity of the Fund's investment decision-making process.

Reform of Re-payment Options for Retirees – A.7602: This proposal would permit retiree members of the New York State and Local Employees Retirement System to repay the outstanding balance of a loan at any time, allowing the retiree the full benefit of their retirement allowance at any point of time during their membership in the system including retirement.

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

DISTRICT OFFICE
6605 Fort Hamilton Parkway
Brooklyn, NY 11219
718-236-1764

WORLD TRADE CENTER RESCUE AND RECOVERY LEGISLATION

In 2006, the Legislature passed **A.11255A (Chapter 445 of the Laws of 2006)** to provide an accidental death benefit to the beneficiaries of certain retirees who participated in the World Trade Center (WTC) rescue, recovery or cleanup operations. In addition, the Legislature passed **A.11730 (Chapter 489 of the Laws 2008)** which enables certain individuals who were involved in WTC operations, who are not eligible for presumptive eligibility for accidental disability benefits, to be entitled to such presumption.

This year the legislature has revisited this issue as it has been acknowledged that several groups of public employees were not covered under the original legislation. With direction from the Governor's taskforce on 9/11 health issues, the Assembly negotiated a bill with the Senate and Governor that would do the following:

WTC Health Insurance Bill Expansion of Benefits –

A.10498: Officers and employees of the State, public authorities and municipalities outside New York City risked their well-being when they helped in rescue and recovery efforts at the World Trade Center site after tragedy struck in New York City on September 11, 2001. As a result, for the past seventeen years, many of these brave individuals have been faced with a multitude of health issues that require several doctor visits and time off. Although we cannot cure them of their illnesses, we must recognize their ultimate sacrifice and do what we can to help them during these difficult times. This legislation would ensure they have a line of duty sick leave so they can receive treatment for the illness and convalesce without loss of their accrued sick leave.

Extension of the Filing of Notification – A.10499: This bill would extend for another two years the filing requirement for workers compensation and pension benefits for those involved in the rescue and recovery at the World Trade Center.



EXTENDING AND ENHANCING CIVIL SERVICE PROTECTIONS



A.6990-A: This proposal would ensure that, consistent with the New York State Constitution, supervisory personnel in the emergency medical service are the most qualified to serve in these positions of paramount responsibility.

A.8006: This bill would allow the Triborough Bridge and Tunnel Authority Superior Officer Benevolent Association of the MTA to elect into binding arbitration with public employers of the Metropolitan Transit Authority.

A.8057-B: This initiative would require all fire chiefs in any fire department with less than five career fire fighters employed to have minimum qualifications of training to enable them to conduct their job safely and successfully.

A.11223: This bill would provide that a labor class employee shall not be removed or subjected to disciplinary action except for incompetency or misconduct shown after a hearing on charges.

EXPANDING DISABILITY BENEFITS AND RETIREMENT BENEFITS FOR THOSE OUR COMMUNITIES RELY ON MOST



Court Employees Reduced Retirement Age

– A.9910: This bill would allow any Tier 6 member who is a uniformed court officer or peace officer employed by the unified court system to retire without early age reduction upon attaining 30 years of creditable service and age 55. It would also reduce the normal retirement age from 63 to 62, and lessen the reductions in benefits for those who retire prior to normal retirement age.

Court Employees Disability Clarification

– A.9909: This bill would allow a court officer or peace officer employed by the Unified Court System who is injured as a result of a physical assault by an assailant during the performance of their duties to be eligible to receive accidental disability retirement benefits.

20 Year Retirement County Opt-in – A.10950: This bill would allow county correction officers and deputy sheriffs who are engaged in correction officer duties to become covered by the provisions of a special 20-year retirement plan, which will provide a benefit of one-half of final average salary upon retirement, if the employing county elects to provide such benefits.

Nassau County Fire Marshalls Disability Retirement

– A.10695: This legislation would provide a 3/4 performance of duty retirement to various fire marshal titles within Nassau County who are injured in the line of duty.

Nassau County Sheriff's Disability Retirement

– A.9010: This legislation would provide a 3/4 performance of duty retirement to Sheriffs, Under Sheriffs and Correction Officers in Nassau County.

Disability Nassau County AMTs – A.10721: This legislation would provide a 3/4 performance of duty retirement benefit to various ambulance medical technician titles within Nassau County.



In May, Assemblyman Abbate had the distinct honor of representing Speaker Carl Heastie at the State of NY Police Officers Memorial Wall Ceremony. This wall honors the memory and sacrifice of police officers from around NYS who have been slain in the line of duty. It is located at the Empire State Plaza near the State Capitol Building in the City of Albany, NY.

The names of 1,504 officers are engraved on the memorial wall. Among them are the names of 863 officers from the New York City Police Department. The remaining 641 officers are from 145 police agencies statewide and 6 federal agencies.



ANNOUNCING NEW UNION CONTRACTS

This year saw the resolution of a number of contracts between New York 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:

- **A.11227: United University Professionals (UUP)**
- **A.10606-A: DC-37 Rent Regulation Unit**
- **A.9665: Court Officers employed by the Unified Court System**

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News from the NYS Assembly Committee on Governmental Employees

Peter J. Abbate, Chair ♦ Carl E. Heastie, Speaker

PROTECTION AND RETENTION OF OUR FIRST RESPONDERS AND EDUCATORS

Over the course of this session several pieces of legislation were introduced that would protect the individuals that our community relies on most; our police, fire, sanitation, EMTs and corrections workers. 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 Assembly took action on several pieces of legislation to protect our first responders. The ability to retain our public safety workforce so they may teach our incoming recruits on-the-job experience is also of great importance. Below are a few initiatives to assure that their families will be taken care of after these brave men and women have made the ultimate sacrifice for their communities.

A.8108-A: This bill would allow previously tenured supervising staff of school districts to experience a shortened probationary period if appointed by the Board of Education to another position.

A.8375-A: This proposal would allow for sheriff's departments to accept graduation certificates from the NYC Police Department for the purpose of computing creditable service.

A.9056-A: This legislation extends the escalation of a cost of living increase of approximately 3% for all line-of-duty widows or widowers for fiscal year 2018-19.