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**DATE:** FEBRUARY 26, 2013

**TO:** ERIE COUNTY LEGISLATURES

**FROM:** JANIS MIDDLEBROOKS

**SUBJECT** **RE: NYS Correction Officer William J. Middlebrooks, Jr.**  
**Ret. No. 007864890**  
**Reg. No. 35620707**

**BILL**  
**BILL A7709-2011 and A7709A**

**MAJORITY FAX:** 716-858-2915  
**MINORITY FAX:** 716-858-8818

**TO WHOM IT MAY CONCERN:**

I am a widow of a former New York State Correction Officer. My husband worked for the State of New York for 18 years before he retired due to cancer. Nearly seven years ago, my husband lost his fight with colon cancer. We were married for 38 years and was still together at the time of his death. I took care of my husband at home until he passed away from the agony of this terrible disease. I watched him deteriorate right before my eyes, and it was a sight I will never forget.

After my husband passed away on December 3, 2006, I notified the State of New York Retirement System, and at this time I was told that I would not be entitled to my husband's pension because they say he had never returned a letter that they say they mailed to him. Since this time the State of New York has denied me the right to receive my husband's pension. How the State of New York can deny me this money is mind boggling to me. My husband had me named on all of the paperwork as his beneficiary and the State is keeping what my husband worked so many years for. I do not know how many spouses they have done this to, but it is down right robbery to me. I want the people of New York State to know that Albany is treating widows/widowers unfairly after they have lost their loved ones and then to be told they will not receive their pension. I pray that the people who have made this decision are able to sleep peacefully at night knowing what they are doing to people like me. I know they would not like it if it happened to their spouse, but I am sure they would find some way to make exceptions for their loved ones. With the State of New York in a budget crisis, there seems to be no crisis when they outright steal money from widows/widowers who are entitled to their spouse's pensions. Where does this money go, if not to the family members?

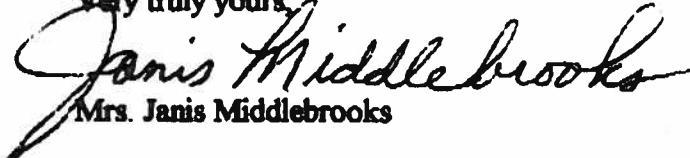
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**I am praying that your offices and Senator Kennedy's office will be able to assist me with the passage of a bill that has been prepared for me in this matter further by not letting the bill sit in limbo for long periods of time, but to keep it moving in an expeditious manner so that justice will prevail to a widow and her family who has waited long enough.**

**Dealing with this situation for so long has been overburdening and depressing but I will be making this my life work, until I die to receive what my husband worked so hard for. I feel that New York State should not be trying to balance its budget situation by stealing money from widows/widowers and children. I can be reached at (716) 834-0917 if you need to talk with me regarding this matter.**

**Thank you for your attention to this matter.**

**Very truly yours,**

  
**Mrs. Janis Middlebrooks**

**Cc: Senator Timothy Kennedy  
2239 South Park Avenue  
Buffalo, NY 14220**

**Martin J. Golden, Chairman of Civil Service Pension  
Legislative Office Building - Room 409  
Albany NY 12247**

**Gov. Andrew Cuomo  
State Capital  
Albany NY 12247**

**Mr. Michael Johnson  
c/o New York State Comptroller's Office  
65 Court Street  
Buffalo NY 14202**

**Honorable James A.W. McLeod  
City Court of Buffalo  
50 Delaware Avenue  
Buffalo NY 14202**

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**Cc: Legislature Timothy Hagues  
Legislature Betty Jean Grant  
Legislature Lynn M. Marinelli  
Legislature Thomas A. Loughran  
Legislature Thomas J. Mazur  
Legislature Terrence D. McCracken  
Legislature Kevin R. Hardwick  
Legislature Edward A. Rath, III  
Legislature Lynn M. Dixon  
Legislature Joseph C. Longo  
Legislature John J. Mills**