



ERIE COUNTY LEGISLATURE

HON. LYNNE DIXON

LEGISLATOR
DISTRICT 9

June 27, 2013

Hon. Mark C. Poloncarz
Erie County Executive
95 Franklin Street
Buffalo, New York 14202

RE: Director of Veteran's Services Position

Dear County Executive Poloncarz:

Earlier this year, your administration relieved the Director of Veterans Services from his duties, creating a vacancy in the position. As I'm sure we mutually agree, the Veteran's Services Director position is extremely important, and the work their office does is invaluable to Erie County's 70,000 veterans and their families.

Erie County was once a trailblazer in providing care and services for our veterans. In 1945, we were the first County in the State of New York to open an office for veteran's advocacy. Since that time, this office has helped veterans take advantage of the benefits they earned, including assistance with health care, educational opportunities and financial relief. Nearly 70 years after the office opened its doors, our veteran population has grown older, and they need the services now more than ever. This is not the time for us, as elected officials, to allow the office and the services it provides to be placed on a back burner.

As a legislator, I am uncomfortable that this department has become a rudderless ship, and think it is time for action. The last Director of the department didn't have the federal certification to do the job for the first 8 months he was there. After he finally became certified, he served for under a year before he was relieved of his command. This is troubling to me, and I am writing to request your immediate action on appointing a Director of Veterans Services that is certified by the Department of Veterans Affairs to provide the services our veterans earned!

Sincerely,

LYNNE M. DIXON
Erie County Legislator

cc: The Erie County Legislature
Department of Veterans Affairs, Buffalo Office