

Cuts to NYC Veterans Budget Killed Thanks to Veterans' Advocacy

NEW YORK, NY (June 13, 2017) – In January of this year, after a hard fought campaign by IAVA and its partners to create a veterans department within the New York City government, Mayor de Blasio revealed that he would cut the budget of the NYC Department of Veterans Services (DVS). IAVA, along with our allies including the New York City Veterans Alliance, [fought back against the cuts](#), calling them “a huge step backwards for New York City as a whole and a major disappointment for the community who fought tirelessly to make the hundreds of thousands of the city’s veterans a priority.”

Yesterday, the city released the final approved version of the budget, which increases funding to \$4.4 million for 2018, up from \$3.6 million in the original proposed budget. We applaud the increased budget, and especially the inclusion of the tax exemption for veteran homeowners led by the intrepid Lee Corvino. But government can’t do it alone. That’s why we also continue to call on the city to create and expand private-public partnerships in future DVS budgets to provide more comprehensive support to non-profit program partners that fill in the gaps, like IAVA’s life-saving and innovative [Rapid Response Referral Program](#).

“New York has come a long way in the last few years. This improved budget is a solid next step. IAVA’s push for a New York City Department of Veterans Services can be a model for major cities across the country to replicate so veterans can get the support at the local level that they deserve. The budget cut that the Mayor originally proposed earlier this year undermined that work,” **said Paul Rieckhoff, IAVA Founder and CEO**. “We’re glad to see that, thanks to the advocacy of IAVA and our partners, these cuts have been killed. But it never should have been an issue. As more and more post-9/11 veterans arrive here for school, to start a business or to attend college using the New GI Bill, New York City and Mayor de Blasio must continue to push the pace. And advocates like IAVA will continue to stand watch. We are still a nation at war, and now is no time for New York City to take its eye off the ball. We continue to stand ready to work alongside the Mayor, the City Council, Commissioner Sutton and Veterans Committee Chairman Eric Ulrich and anyone else who is stepping up to help our community in this important time.”

In December 2015, after a two-year battle with Mayor Bill de Blasio, the future for veterans in New York City changed forever with the signing of bill 314-A into law, establishing a permanent city Department of Veteran Services. The creation of this department was first presented to Mayor de Blasio by IAVA in October 2014 as part of a comprehensive set of policy recommendations for New York City’s veterans. Following the win, IAVA called on other major cities across America to follow NYC’s lead. For more on the history, visit IAVA.org/NYCVets.

For additional analysis on the budget from our friends at the NYC Veterans Alliance, click [here](#).