



## Legislation Text

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**File #:** Res 0961-2019, **Version:** \*

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### Res. No. 961

Resolution calling upon the New York State Legislature to pass, and the Governor to sign, A.2991/ S.0193 in relation to providing scholarships for surviving dependent family members of New York state military personnel who have died while performing any official military duties.

By Council Members Vallone, Ampry-Samuel, Yeger and Cornegy

Whereas, The New York State Education Law establishes Military Enhanced Recognition, Incentive and Tribute (MERIT) scholarships for children, spouses and financial dependents of a member of the armed forces of the United States (U.S.) or state organized militia who died, became severely and permanently disabled or was classified as missing in action in a combat zone or during military training operations in preparation for duty in a combat zone; and

Whereas, Combat zones are areas designated by an executive order from the president of the U.S. in which the U.S. armed forces are engaging or have engaged in combat; and

Whereas, Deceased or severely and permanently disabled veterans whose death, injury or illness occurred in a non-combat zone or during any official military duty are not recognized in the New York State Education Law, thus excluding family members and financial dependents of such veterans from eligibility of scholarship benefits; and

Whereas, A.2991/ S.0193, introduced in 2019 and sponsored by Assemblymember Stephen Hawley and Senator Robert Ort, seeks to expand the MERIT scholarship to surviving dependent family members of New York State military personnel who have died while performing any official military duties; and

Whereas, Through the New York State Higher Education Services Corporation (HESC), recipients of the MERIT scholarship for the 2018-19 academic year received a maximum of \$24,250 if living on campus and

a maximum of \$15,750 if commuting to school to attend a State University of New York or City University of New York institution of higher learning; and

Whereas, According to the most recently available data from a 2015 New York State Comptroller report, HESC awarded an estimated 82 MERIT scholarships worth over \$1.1 million to eligible children, spouses and financial dependents; and

Whereas, Expanding the MERIT scholarship recognizes all active duty soldiers whose life was sacrificed or who became severely or permanently disabled during or in preparation for the service of this nation and values the needs of their family members and dependents; now, therefore, be it

Resolved, That the Council of the City of New York calls upon the New York State Legislature to pass, and the Governor to sign, A.02991/ S.00193 in relation to providing scholarships for surviving dependent family members of New York state military personnel who have died while performing any official military duties.

LS #10636  
5/23/2019  
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