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## Governor Christie Announces Continuation of Vets4Warriors Program

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Tags: [Budget and Spending](#)

*Peer to Peer Support Program for Veterans, Service Members, and Families will Continue with State Funds*

**Trenton, NJ** - Governor Christie today announced that the Vets4Warriors Program, operated by Rutgers University Behavioral Health Care, will be able to continue operations with State support. This announcement follows news that the U.S. Department of Defense may discontinue federal funding for the program. New Jersey's Fiscal Year 2016 budget includes \$8 million to ensure and expand access to health care for veterans in our State; a portion of those funds will be used to support the Vets4Warriors program.

"The Vets4Warriors Program offers an invaluable resource to our nation's service men and women in need," said Governor Christie. "I am committed to continuing mutual efforts with our congressional delegation in preserving funding for this important program. In the meantime, the State of New Jersey will maintain program funding for this year as we work to identify and explore resource options for the future."

Governor Christie's action demonstrates the Administration's strong commitment to New Jersey veterans and their families. This includes creating and enhancing assistance tools that provide financial support and peer counseling services through the New Jersey National Guard State Family Readiness Council, as well as expanding the Department of Military and Veterans' Affairs' successful Veterans Haven program to provide access to services for homeless veterans in the northern part of the state. In addition, the Administration has taken measures to connect veterans and employers to help military service members transition back into the civilian labor market through initiatives such as Helmets2Hardhats, Operation Hire a Jersey Hero and the VETeach program. Governor Christie also has signed legislation that awards high school diplomas to veterans who dropped out to serve in World War II, Korea, and Vietnam and strengthens the support network for military families after the death of a service member.

The Vets4Warriors Peer Support Line, which is available 24/7 and toll-free to all active duty, Reserve and National Guard members, is staffed entirely by veterans. The unique structure of Vets4Warriors allows individuals to receive support in a completely confidential, personal, non-threatening way from other veterans, who know the challenges of military life and the rigors of the transition to civilian life, since they have lived through it themselves.

Chris Kosseff, President of Rutgers University Behavioral Health Care expressed the sentiments of many in reaction to the news saying "I want to express my deepest gratitude to the Governor and the Legislature for keeping Vets4Warriors alive to support our service members and veterans and for keeping 40 veterans employed doing this important work; we look forward to continuing to serve those who keep us safe and free."

Since its inception in December 2011, Vets4Warriors has made over 130,000 veteran contacts and has continuously employed over 40 New Jersey veterans.

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