

Governor Murphy Signs Legislation to Support Disabled Veteran-Owned Businesses

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TRENTON – Governor Phil Murphy today signed S2249/A4211, which revises the number of disabled veterans' businesses required to designate a set-aside contract from three to two. The "Set-Aside Act for Disabled Veterans' Businesses" had established a goal for contracting agencies to set aside at least three percent of their contracts for disabled veterans' businesses, but the act required that at least three disabled veterans' businesses be reasonably likely to bid for a contract for the set-aside to apply to the contract. The legislation signed today underscores Governor Murphy's commitment to promoting economic opportunity among New Jersey veterans.

"It is our obligation – not just as elected officials, but as fellow Americans – to do everything in our power to dismantle obstacles to opportunity for our state's veterans," **said Governor Murphy**. "In recognition of the extraordinary sacrifices made by our disabled veterans and the considerable challenges they continue to face, this legislation will provide a much-needed boost to veteran-owned businesses striving to secure a foothold in our growing economy."

"This law reflects our collective commitment to supporting Veteran-owned businesses," **said Brig. Gen. Lisa J. Hou, Commissioner of the Department of Military and Veterans Affairs and The Adjutant General of New Jersey**. "I encourage all Veteran business owners to register, and continue to update their credentials with New Jersey Start." "The Department of Military and Veteran Affairs stands ready to provide assistance."

"I applaud the Legislature and Governor as they take additional action to help our state's disabled veteran-owned businesses. While in Congress, I've worked to make sure that, after over two decades of war, our nation invests in our returning veterans, whether they're looking to start their own businesses, get an education with the post-9/11 GI Bill, or buy a home with a VA home loan guarantee. I will continue to fight to make sure our veterans get all the benefits they've earned," **said Navy veteran and Congresswoman Mikie Sherrill**.

"As a veteran, myself, I know first-hand the difficulties our men and women in uniform face when they return home. The bill signed by Governor Murphy today will be of tremendous value to our veteran community and can help ease the burden so many are forced to carry," **said Congressman Bill Pascrell, Jr.** "This new law will help veteran small business owners access the means and resources they need to achieve success in their industry. This will benefit our communities and, most importantly, aid those who have given so much for our country."

"In recognition of the many sacrifices men and women in the military have made in service to our nation, we must do all that we can to support veteran-owned businesses here at home," **said Senator Troy Singleton**. "Providing protections and simplifying the process are concrete ways we can assist these courageous individuals as they seek to build, establish and grow their civilian livelihoods."

"New Jersey State government should be doing all it can to be a partner in assisting businesses owned by disabled veterans," **said Senator Steve Oroho, one of the bill sponsors whose Senate term ended last week**. "By making some small but crucial changes, we can cut government red tape, better serve our community of disabled veterans, and make New Jersey a more competitive place for business and job growth. I'm proud this is one of my final bills signed into law."

"This legislation will align New Jersey with both federal and neighboring states' requirements, all of which use the 'rule of two' when designating set-aside contracts for disabled veterans businesses," **said former Assemblyman Dan Benson**. "This, in turn, will make it easier for these enterprises to successfully bid on state contracts. We owe our veterans a debt of gratitude and this bill signing is the latest in a series of steps New Jersey has taken to support its veteran-owned small business community."

"With this bill, we reinforce our commitment to supporting our disabled veterans by streamlining the process for designating set-aside contracts," **said Assemblywoman Verlina Reynolds-Jackson**. "By reducing the requirement from three to two qualified disabled veterans' businesses, New Jersey is not only aligning with national standards but also fostering greater opportunities for veterans to participate in public contracts."

“The NJ State Veterans Chamber of Commerce is incredibly thankful to Governor Murphy and the lawmakers responsible for moving this bill forward and signing it into law,” **said Colonel Jeff Cantor, Founder & CEO, NJ State Veterans Chamber of Commerce.** “This is the first time in the history of our state that state agencies can set aside prime contracts to Disabled Veteran owned businesses. Since there are so few disabled veteran owned businesses, and since the law required three qualified bidders to set aside a contract, it was nearly impossible to set aside a prime contract to a disabled veteran owned business. Now the Governor is reducing that requirement from three to two qualified businesses, we will likely see a significant number of prime contracts set aside. We sincerely thank the Governor for working with the NJ State Veterans Chamber of Commerce, who has been advocating for this bill, and sign it into law. We appreciate Governor Murphy on his focus on improving the lives of New Jersey’s veterans and the New Jersey veterans business community.”

Governor Phil Murphy

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