



September 11, 2019

Remembering 9/11 and Supporting Our Veterans

We all remember where we were, and those first pictures of flames shooting from the side of the World Trade Center in New York City 18 years ago on 9/11. We remember the first responders rushing toward danger as another airplane crashed into the second tower, and the horror of the collapse of both towers. We remember the fear and confusion when a plane crashed into the Pentagon, and a plane crashed into a field in Pennsylvania. We remember the 2,996 people who died in this worst loss of life due to a terrorist incident on U.S. soil.

We also remember the events that unfolded after 9/11, with wars in Afghanistan, Iraq and other locations, with the loss of more than 7,000 U.S. military lives and more than 50,000 U.S. military wounded. We honor those veterans and must always work to support them. I am proud of the men and women who sacrifice so much to keep us safe. It is our duty to take care of them once they return home to keep them safe and healthy.

This is why I have worked with local veteran organizations in Illinois to introduce legislation that was passed and signed into law as Public Act 101-0248 to raise awareness of veterans suffering from Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD) in Illinois. This new law creates the Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder Awareness Fund as a special fund in the state treasury. It allows the issuance of decals for universal special license plates by K9s for Veterans by the Illinois Secretary of State. Fees generated will help fund programs such as K9s for Veterans that assist military members and others suffering from PTSD.

Many veteran counselors have already used K9s for Veterans for veterans suffering from PTSD, with much success. Researchers estimate that 10–14 percent of service members who served in combat have developed PTSD. Michael Tellerino, CEO and Founder of K9s for Veterans said, “K9s for Veterans is proud to work with Representative La Shawn K. Ford on this issue. PTSD is a serious affliction that is highly treatable. Purchasing this new license plate decal will help raise awareness of those afflicted and help those who suffer adjust once they are back home.”

Let us always remember 9/11 and our veterans who need our support.

Sincerely,

La Shawn K. Ford
State Representative-Eighth District