



Department of Assessment

128 East Buffalo Street

Jay Franklin
Director

Inclusion through Diversity

Irene Kehoe
Assistant Director

To: Tompkins County Legislature
From: Jay Franklin
Date: December 20, 2016
Subject: RPTL 458-a Alternative Veterans Exemption – Operation Graphic Hand local option

Information is provided on a newly signed available local option of Section 458-a of the real property law which would allow the benefits of this exemption to be extended to reservists called up under Operation Graphic Hand.

1. Action Request

To consider whether to pass this local option exemption.

2. Background

With the signing of new real property tax exemptions by the governor, I bring each one forward for your information/consideration. It is not the position of my office to advocate for or against any exemption but rather simply to provide you the necessary information to decide whether the exemption is in the best interest of your constituents. I then forward this information to the other taxing jurisdictions along with what you have decided to do. While they do not need to follow your lead, they like to know what you have done.

As part of the 2016 Legislative Session, NYS authorized a new local option to Section 458-a of the real property tax law. Tompkins County already authorizes an exemption for Veterans who served during a period of conflict (as defined by this section). This new local option would extend these benefits to those reservists who were called up during Operation Graphic Hand.

Operation Graphic Hand was the name given to the joint operation between the Secretary of Defense and the Postmaster General in response to the postal strike of 1970. The postal strike began on March 18 and on March 23rd, President Nixon authorized this operation. This operation was only authorized in New York City during the period from March 23 to April 4. Approximately 28,100 active and reserve personnel were mobilized. (About 26,273 reservists).

If adopted by the County, the reservists who delivered mail during this period would receive the benefits of this exemption (15% of their assessment up to a max of \$15,000).

3. Financial Implication

In talking with the Veterans Administration office for the county, there is no way to know approximately how many reservists that were called up to deliver mail during Operation Graphic Hand.

There would be financial implication for the county other than a possibility of a reduced tax base.