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Senate of Pennsylvania

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TO: All Senators

DATE: June 26, 2012

FROM: Senator John P. Blake

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'JPB', written over the printed name 'Senator John P. Blake'.

SUBJECT: Co-Sponsorship – Buyback of military time for Scranton’s Public Safety and non-uniformed employees

In the near future, I plan to introduce legislation that would remove a three-year time limit within which members of the Police, Fire and employee pension systems must begin working for the city in order to be eligible for purchasing credit for time spent in the armed forces. This two-bill package will serve as companion legislation to House Bills 89 and 90, introduced by my friend and Pennsylvania House colleague from Scranton – Representative Kevin Murphy.

Under current law, Scranton is the only municipality in the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania subject to this time limit due to its unique status as the state’s only Second Class A city – and a prior oversight in statutory language that omitted the City’s public safety workers who have served in the military from an otherwise statewide standard regarding military service buy-back related to the pensions of public safety and non-uniformed personnel. These bills, which would correct this inequity and which are supported by the Mayor and the City Council of Scranton, have received actuarial analyses from the Public Employees’ Retirement Commission (PERC) and said analyses revealed no actuarial costs to the city resulting from enactment. The PERC further recommends, “that the General Assembly and the Governor consider policy issues identified in the actuarial note transmittal.”

While this bill is limited in scope to the City of Scranton, I ask for your support in providing the brave men and women who return from active duty to serve the citizens of the City of Scranton with the same benefits provided our returning veterans in every other municipality of this Commonwealth.

If you would like to co-sponsor this legislation, please contact my office at 717-787-6481. If you have any questions, please contact Kyle Mullins at kmullins@pasenate.com.