Prior to this ruling, only spouses and children of a fallen service member could be buried at a National Cemetery

Washington, D.C.—Today, Rep. Steve Israel praised the Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) for its decision to allow parents of fallen service members to be buried alongside their son or daughter in National Cemeteries. Rep. Israel introduced similar legislation in 2008, and has long supported this change to the VA's interment rules based on input from Long Island military families.

"I applaud the VA for amending its rules to allow parents of fallen service members to be buried alongside their child," said Rep. Israel. "For these families, who have made the ultimate sacrifice, it's the least we can do. I hope that this decision will give them some peace of mind, knowing that they can be laid to rest with their loved one."

Dorine Kenney, the mother of Army Pfc. Jacob S. Fletcher who died in an IED explosion in Iraq in 2003, applied for a waiver from the VA to be laid to rest alongside her son at the Long Island National Cemetery in Farmingdale, but was told that no decision would be made prior to her death. She worked with Rep. Israel to bring attention to the issue and supported his legislation.