

Retired Army Reservist from Herkimer Joins Hanna at the Capitol

WASHINGTON, D.C. – U.S. Rep. Richard Hanna this evening hosted a retired Army Reservist from Herkimer, N.Y. to listen to President Barack Obama deliver his third State of the Union Address.

Retired **Staff Sergeant Michael Sportello** was injured in Iraq during his service there in 2003-2004 with the 82nd Airborne Division. Sportello served in several areas– including Fallujah and Ramadi.

Each Member of Congress is allowed to bring one guest to the State of the Union Address. Hanna said it is an honor to be joined by Sportello.

"To serve one's country is among the most noble and selfless acts available to man," Hanna said. "It is wholly appropriate that members of our Armed Forces experience the address from our Commander in Chief. It's a privilege to have Staff Sergeant Sportello here tonight."

Guests were not able sit with Members of Congress on the House floor for the joint-session, but they were seated in the galleries that overlook the floor.

UPDATED: Hanna Reaction To State of The Union Address

"While we disagree on some of the means and methods, I was pleased to hear the President talk about strengthening the middle class and reviving economic mobility. It is imperative that we reform and invest in our education system to prepare young Americans for 21st century jobs in high-tech industries.

"There are immediate areas where we can work together. Republicans can work with the President right now on approving a long-term Highway bill that creates jobs and boosts our economic competitiveness.

"I am hopeful that Republicans, Democrats, and the President will work together in 2012 to foster an environment favorable to private sector job creation. Let's find areas to cooperate where principle allows; let's take the best ideas and move forward."

Hanna joined with Upstate New York representatives prior to the address and will participate in bipartisan seating. Hanna sat with a group of Democrats and Republicans, including Massachusetts Democrat Rep. Bill Keating, Hanna's neighbor in the Cannon House Office Building.

Hanna and Keating together introduced the American Growth, Recovery, Empowerment and Entrepreneurship Act (AGREE). The AGREE Act is a jobs bill that incorporates elements that Republicans and Democrats have supported. This bill is the companion legislation to S.1866 that was recently introduced by U.S. Sens. Chris Coons (D-Del.) and Marco Rubio (R-Fla.).