



News...
from State Senator



DARREL AUBERTINE

48th Senate District

Albany Office: Legislative Office Building, Room 903, Albany, New York 12247 • (518) 455-2761 • Fax: (518) 426-6946

District Office: 317 Washington Street, 4th Floor, Watertown, New York 13601 • (315) 782-3418 • Fax: (315) 782-6357

Satellite Office: SUNY Oswego, 136 Rich Hall, Oswego, NY 13126 - (315) 312-3106 Fax: (315) 312-4206

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Contact: Drew Mangione

Aubertine, Colleagues Call for Conference Committees

Lawmakers ask Assembly Speaker and Senate Leader to get the open process started, Senators call on the minority conferences to provide policy alternatives in lieu of just saying “No”

ALBANY (April 14, 2010)—State Sen. Darrel J. Aubertine and several of his colleagues have called on Assembly Speaker Sheldon Silver and Senate Majority Conference Leader John Sampson to initiate the conference committee process.

“The fact is the Senate has begun the process and reached out to both the minority conference and the Assembly, but the process has gone nowhere,” Sen. Aubertine said. “We are in the toughest budget crisis this state has ever faced and have passed the deadline. It is imperative that we take the time to get this budget done right as soon as possible, but that should include open and public conference committees.”

In the letter, signed by Sen. Aubertine and Sens. David J. Valesky, Craig M. Johnson, Brian X. Foley, and William T. Stachowski, the Senators note that the passage of Senate and Assembly budget proposals marked the start of the formal process and to date, only one leadership level meeting has been held. The Senators said they believe the process is an appropriate and necessary vehicle for the dialogue needed to bridge the gap between budget proposals.

“We need to put people before politics here and bring everyone to the table,” said Sen. Aubertine, who is chair of the Senate Upstate Caucus. “The Assembly and the Senate, the majority and minority conferences, need to be involved in this process. Our proposals need to be reconciled and the minority conferences which have said ‘no’ need to be more involved and present their policy alternatives now, before the bills are printed.”