



New York State Senate Democratic Majority Accomplishments 2009-2010

Jobs

Top priority of Senate Majority Conference: created or protected more than 400,000 jobs through Power for Jobs, Green Jobs/Green NY, and other targeted employment efforts. New incentives reward companies for creating and retaining good jobs and expanding in-state operations. Committed to improving business environment through property tax cap and lower state spending.

Support for Small Businesses

Reformed and expanded the Small Business Revolving Loan Fund to provide \$50 million in new credit for small businesses to create jobs all over the state. New initiatives boost fair access to contracts and credit for minority- and women-owned small businesses and reduce health insurance costs for all small businesses.

Property Tax Reform

Passed a tough property tax cap twice – caps school and municipal taxes at 2% this year. Passed a full tax-relief legislative package including direct relief to hardest-hit taxpayers through efficient “circuit breaker” credit; cap on local property tax levies; reduced mandates on schools and local governments to save money and reduce taxes.

Pension Reform

Saved money by creating a new government-worker pension tier for the first time in 27 years, reducing costs for state and local governments and saving over \$48 billion for taxpayers.

Authorities Reform

Imposed tough new rules on out-of-control public authorities to protect taxpayers and improve state services, historic reform after decades of abuse – first major authorities reform in seventy years.

Divorce Reform

Broke a fifty-year logjam to reform divorce laws in New York and make proceedings less complicated and more fair: streamlined the divorce process with no-fault divorce, established guidelines for determining maintenance awards, and ensured both spouses have access to an attorney for divorce litigation.

Rockefeller Drug Law Reform

Worked with families, DAs and police to pass historic sentencing reforms to reduce recidivism, increase access to treatment for addiction, prevent crime and save money for taxpayers.

Managed Care Reform

Imposed tough standards to make HMOs more responsive and accountable to patients and health care providers, including faster approval of services, quick payment of claims and more effective appeal procedures for consumers.

Innovation and Reform in Education

Increased charter-school cap, added innovations to boost student achievement and unlock \$700 million in federal funding for all of New York's public schools. New federal funding this fall to prevent teacher layoffs and keep local schools strong. Passed Dignity for All Students Act to prevent bullying and harassment, teach tolerance and allow all students to learn.

State Parks Kept Open

Targeted funding to maintain operations at 79 State Parks, zoos, botanic gardens, aquaria, and DEC campgrounds, supporting recreation options for families in tough economic times.

Homeowners and Neighbors Empowered to Fight Foreclosures and Require Repairs

Led the nation in consumer protections that have kept foreclosure rates among the lowest nationally with tough standards for lenders, early notice of foreclosure actions, mandatory settlement conferences, and clear duty on banks to maintain foreclosed properties.

E-mail notice of Sex Offender Residency

Protected children and families through new law providing for automatic email/text/phone notification when dangerous sex offenders move into the neighborhood.

Leandra's Law

Got tough on drunk drivers who endanger children, making DUI while transporting a child a felony offense; supported by the family of Leandra Rosado, an 11-year old girl who was killed in an SUV operated by a drunk driver while riding with 7 other children.

Access to Courts

Created new structure and strong funding to ensure more equal access to justice. New reforms to fractured and inefficient indigent defense and civil legal services systems will ensure that all New Yorkers can access our courts without putting additional burdens on taxpayers.

Fighting for Women's Health

Protected women's access to reproductive health services by increasing penalties for clinic violence. Improved maternal health care with more access to midwives, solid coverage of childbirth expenses and prenatal vitamins. Protected and enhanced medical rights and services, including breast reconstruction surgery after mastectomy, sexual assault services, rights to breastfeed children.

Fighting Domestic Violence

Stood with domestic violence survivors to pass a historic 20-bill package to increase safety and improve services and protections for survivors and toughen penalties for perpetrators.

Domestic Workers Bill of Rights

Worked with workers, employers and families to pass first-in-the-nation basic wage & hours protections for domestic workers, previously excluded from federal and state fair labor standards created in the 1930s.

Balanced State Budgets

Closed \$31 billion in budget gaps in two years with real cuts to state spending for the first time in decades, reducing over 70,000 local government positions around the state.