



NEW YORK STATE SENATOR

William Larkin

Larkin Supports Creation Of Pandemic Preparedness Task Force

[WILLIAM J. LARKIN JR.](#) April 26, 2006

Senator Bill Larkin (R-C, Cornwall-on-Hudson) is cosponsoring a bill in the State Senate (S.7634) that would establish a pandemic preparedness task force on influenza for the State of New York.

According to the legislation, this task force would be composed of eighteen members representing state government, the public health field, health care providers, emergency response organizations and agriculture. It would be charged with preparing an influenza pandemic plan and designating the responsibilities of each agency in the case of a major outbreak.

"Pandemics happen when a new influenza virus emerges and infects a large number of people," said Senator Larkin. "Even now, two of these new pandemic-causing viruses are being passed among the population and are responsible for the majority of influenza cases each year. Knowing how difficult it has been when we have had shortages of flu vaccines in the past, planning for pandemic influenza is critical. This legislation is based on a checklist designed by the Department of Health and Human Services and the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention to assist state and local jurisdictions to adequately prepare for disease outbreaks. The task force would provide a protocol and guidance to local health departments and local information networks in the development of their influenza pandemic plans. It would be wise for the state to prepare a plan and a response now before

the next serious flu season hits."