



NEW YORK STATE SENATOR

Neil D. Breslin

State Senate Passes Senator Breslin's Bill Reforming the Preservation and Availability of Gubernatorial Records

NEIL D. BRESLIN March 31, 2009

Last week the State Senate passed bill S.738, reforming how the Governor's records and other Executive Chamber records are to be kept. Under this legislation, the Governor will collect and maintain records which will be submitted to the office of state archives and become public information once the Governor's term has ended. The bill, which has passed the Assembly every year but one since 1999, passed the Senate unanimously on March 10, 2009.

"It is only appropriate that state archivists, who are trained to properly store and manage such documents, are assigned the task of preserving these important state records," said State Senator Neil Breslin (D-Albany).

In essence, all of these records will become property of New York State upon completion of the Governor's term. An archivist will examine all of the submitted material and determine what information is important to the archives and what can be disposed of. It is important that a comprehensive record of the Governor's activities and decisions are available to the public so that the decisions, policies and programs initiated by the Governor can be fully understood. This bill will amend previous recordkeeping laws so that there is a clearer and more accessible way to access a history of gubernatorial actions.

"This piece of legislation shines light on the innermost dealings of state government. Records created by public officials in the course of governing rightfully belong to the government and the citizens of the state," said Senator Breslin.