



NEW YORK STATE SENATOR

Andrea Stewart-Cousins

## SENATOR ANDREA STEWART-COUSINS: SENATE BILL SIGNED INTO LAW ALLOWS PATIENTS GREATER FLEXIBILITY; Organ Donor can Designate Non-relative to Consent to Donation

ANDREA STEWART-COUSINS May 12, 2009

| ISSUE: **HEALTH**

State Senator Andrea Stewart-Cousins (D/WF – 35th District) applauded the Governor's approval of Senate bill 3910, which allows patients greater choice and control over who can determine their status as an organ donor.

"As the make-up or definition of a family has evolved over the years, it is only appropriate that we, as lawmakers, make sure laws are amended to address those changes and ensure the inclusion of everyone, especially when it comes to crucial healthcare decisions," stated Senator Andrea Stewart-Cousins. "I was pleased to support this measure that updates the public health law to give patients greater choice in who they can designate as a health care proxy agent according to their own needs."

Senator Stewart-Cousins said that the specific provisions of the new law amends the list of people who can consent to organ donation by adding the patient's designated health care proxy agent or disposition of remains agent to include domestic partner. "This is critical to New York's patients whose sole remaining family member or trusted loved one is a domestic partner. Current law left these patients out which was blatantly unfair," said Senator Andrea Stewart-Cousins.

"With this new law, New Yorkers can rest assured that their wishes are executed once they pass on. I was pleased that both houses of the Legislature approved this measure and Governor Paterson signed Senate bill 3910 into law," concluded Senator Andrea Stewart-

Cousins.