



NEW YORK STATE SENATOR

Liz Krueger

Liz Krueger Calls for Mandated Disclosure of Business Relationships Between Lobbyists and Legislators Through Passage of Bill She Introduced Nearly Two Years Ago

LIZ KRUEGER September 22, 2008

New York— In the wake of recent and continued Albany ethics scandals, State Senator Liz Krueger urged her colleagues to pass her bill S.1679, introduced nearly two years ago, which would require lobbyists to report campaign contributions, professional relationships with public officials, and employment relationships with relatives of public officials.

"The time for talk on ethics reform and more government transparency has long since passed," said Senator Krueger. "This legislation would increase the amount of information shared with the public regarding relationships between lobbyists and legislators and bring much needed sunlight into our governmental process."

The first provision of S.1679 addresses difficulties in determining the extent of lobbyists' contributions to political campaigns. Contributions are often given by lobbyists with the goal of inappropriately or illegally influencing the governmental decision making process. This legislation would reveal any such relationship to the public.

The next two provisions address issues of business employment relationships between lobbyists and public officials or their families. Because the New York State legislature is officially a part time job, New York State legislators are often employed in positions with law

firms that do business with lobbying firms.

"By requiring these relationships to be disclosed, cases like the recent indictment of Assemblyman Anthony Seminerio might be avoided in the future," said Senator Krueger.

"People are right to fear that Albany is passing or stopping legislation based on some member's operating on a pay to play basis. I love my job. But my biggest nightmare is that some legislators are exploiting loopholes in our laws for personal gain. Passing this legislation would be a big step toward discouraging businesses and legislators from entering into compromising relationships and would help us all earn back the public's trust. I would also like to see us pass another of my bills (S.8732) which would prevent legislators convicted of felonies involving their office from collecting government pensions."