



NEW YORK STATE SENATOR

Liz Krueger

Senate Ethics Committee Launches Statewide Hearings on Ethics Reform Proposals Expands EPIC Eligibility

LIZ KRUEGER May 27, 2009

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(New York, NY) The New York State Senate Ethics Committee today began a series of three public hearings throughout the state to listen to comments and ideas from the public about several ethics reform proposals. Four bills will be discussed during the hearings, two sponsored by Senator Liz Krueger and two sponsored by Senator Daniel Squadron.

The bills are:

- "Pay-to-Play" Lobbyist and State Contractor Contribution Limits, Restrictions and Disclosure (S744A, Krueger): Lowers contributions from lobbyists and firms that receive state contracts and requires lobbyists to disclose campaign contributions, and business relationships with public officials or their family members.
- Campaign Funds Personal-Use and Disposal Restrictions (S743A, Krueger): Restricts campaign fund expenditures for personal use and prescribes for the proper use and disposal of campaign funds.

- Commission on Governmental Ethics (bill draft, Squadron): Creates a nine-member commission to oversee both the executive and legislative branches of government and enforcement power over Article 14 of Election Law.
- Disclosure by Public Officials (bill draft, Squadron): Requires legislators to disclose business relationships; creates a new category for value of disclosure; and requires random audits of financial disclosure statements.

“Ethics reform is key to an open, transparent and honest State government,” Senator Krueger said. “There are many important proposals, I am sponsoring two bills that would strengthen our ethics laws by ensuring that lobbyists do not have undue influence and that campaign funds are used for legitimate campaign expenses. It is very important that voters have faith in the system, and trust that legislators will hold themselves to the highest standard.”

“We can't fix ethics oversight unless we fix the structure of our oversight bodies,” said Senator Squadron. “That's why I have been working with partners and colleagues to create an independent ethics oversight body with strong enforcement powers. I look forward to receiving input from the public on our proposals and working toward quick passage of strong ethics reform legislation that will create truly independent oversight.”

These hearings, a dialogue between lawmakers and the public, are part of the Senate's commitment to a robust committee process and creating transparency in the legislative process.

The schedule for the three hearings are:

Thursday, May 28, 2009, 10 AM

250 Broadway, 19th Floor

New York, NY 10007

Friday, May 29, 2009, 11 AM

Erie County Legislature

92 Franklin Street, 4th Floor, Buffalo, NY

Tuesday, June 2, 2009, 11:30 AM

State Capitol, Room 124

Albany, NY 12207