



NEW YORK STATE SENATOR

Darrel J. Aubertine

Senator Aubertine and Senate Democrats: Let's Put Politics Aside, Get Back to Work

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Court asks lawmakers to create power sharing agreement, Espada-led GOP refuses fair deal

ALBANY (June 16, 2009)—State Sen. Darrel J. Aubertine said today that the Senate must move beyond new Senate Republican Leader Pedro Espada's power grab and get back to work on important legislation to create and sustain jobs, provide flexibility for school districts and local governments, and provide substantive property tax relief.

"We've now lost a full week of session," Sen. Aubertine said. "It's disappointing because it means we have spent the last week in a political food fight instead of moving forward with legislation to create jobs and provide property tax relief. The judge declined to rule and put the onus on us to get things back on track and finish out this session. There are a lot of important issues and the Espada-led Republicans have refused to negotiate in good faith."

State Supreme Court Justice Thomas McNamara declined to make any ruling on the power grab, asking the Senate to come together and decide on a power sharing agreement. Senate Democrats have proposed a truly fair power sharing deal that would take politics out of the process and put New Yorkers first, dividing power evenly.

Included in the Democrats' proposal:

- Democratic and Republican Presidents of the Senate would alternate daily;
- Floor Leaders would alternate daily (from a different party than that day's President of the Senate); and
- A 6-member Senate Conference Committee (3 Democrats, 3 Republicans) would work together to determine what legislation reaches the floor.

"I think it's a very fair offer of a power sharing agreement," Sen. Aubertine said. "The fact that it was rejected out of hand demonstrates a level of arrogance that the Espada-led Republicans have adopted here of putting politics ahead of people. Without the other side willing to come to the table and even discuss this proposal, it's difficult to do anything. This clearly shows all of us that this was never about cooperation between two parties. This has been a power grab plain and simple."

The power grab has delayed the passing of important legislation, including home rule bills, a Power for Jobs extender to support 400,000 jobs statewide introduced by Sen. Aubertine, a bill to green jobs through stimulus funding, and efforts to provide property tax relief.

Senator Aubertine added: "I urge the Senate Republicans and their leader Senator Espada to join us and get back to governing. If my colleagues are serious about reform and getting results, they will put people before politics and come to the table to put a real power sharing agreement, above their own personal gain."