



NEW YORK STATE SENATOR

Dean G. Skelos

Senator Skelos Calls for Freeze on State Money for Acorn

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Letter to Attorney General & Comptroller Urges Stop on State Funds for Controversial Organization and its Partner Groups

Senate Republican Leader Dean Skelos today urged Attorney General Andrew Cuomo and Comptroller Thomas DiNapoli to freeze all state funds slated to go to ACORN, its sister organization, the New York Agency for Community Affairs (NYACA), and any other organizations that use state funds to contract with ACORN.

In a letter to the Attorney General and Comptroller (below), Senator Skelos cited the overwhelming vote last night by the United States Senate to stop federal grants and funding to ACORN and its associated organizations, as well as the probe launched by the Brooklyn District Attorney's Office to investigate potential criminal activity at ACORN's New York offices, as reasons why all state funding to ACORN and its closely-tied sister organization, the New York Agency For Community Affairs (NYACA), should be stopped.

The letter read, in part: "New Yorkers are reading new reports every day about inappropriate and possibly illegal activities at ACORN, not just in our state, but other cities across the country. From housing fraud to voter fraud, the possibility that our tax dollars are being misused for potential criminal activities must be investigated and the flow of tax money must be stopped."

ACORN, as well as its partner group, New York Agency for Community Affairs, are slated to receive almost half a million dollars in state funds, including grants sponsored by Assembly Speaker Sheldon Silver and ten other members of the Assembly Democrat conference, as well as grants sponsored by ten Senate Democrats.

The letter also pointed out that this year's state budget included \$2 million that was added to the Department of State's budget for census-related work involving community outreach. It also included \$6 million for community groups to help implement the Help America Vote Act (HAVA). These funds could go to ACORN. Also, millions of dollars in federal stimulus money could be allocated by the state for ACORN, NYACA and other related groups.

Just last week, Senate Democrats argued in support of so-called 'green jobs' legislation, sponsored by Senator Darrel Aubertine, that could funnel millions more to ACORN and NYACA.

In addition, the letter said: “Not another dime of state tax money should be approved for ACORN or NYACA until a thorough investigation is conducted into their activities to determine their legality. With the state facing a multi-billion dollar deficit we simply cannot afford to give money to organizations engaged in fraud and abuse of tax dollars.”

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