



NEW YORK STATE SENATOR

David J. Valesky

Senator Valesky Applauds Sweeping Ethics Reform Legislation

DAVID J. VALESKY January 13, 2010

| ISSUE: **ETHICS, CAMPAIGN FINANCE, GOVERNMENT OPERATIONS, LEGISLATURE, EXECUTIVE**

SYRACUSE, N.Y.—State Senator David J. Valesky (D-Oneida) today applauded the introduction of the most sweeping ethics and campaign finance reform ever in the Legislature. The legislation provides greater information regarding legislators’ outside sources of income, creates a body within the New York State Board of Elections to enforce greater adherence to campaign finance laws, requires greater disclosure from lobbyists and restores an independent lobbying commission.

“For years, I have called for this reform, and I have been actively pushing for its adoption. Today’s agreement represents significant progress toward putting an end to ineffective ethics rules and enforcement,” said Senator Valesky, Vice President Pro-Tempore of the Senate.

“I call on my colleagues on both sides of the aisle to join me in expeditious passage of this legislation so that we can begin the new year by showing our commitment to good governance”

Among the many provisions of the plan, legislators will be required to reveal in greater detail their sources of outside income. The package also fills an existing gap in state ethics law by explicitly outlawing the use of state resources for outside, for-profit business.

“The public has the right to know who legislators are doing business with, and if those relationships are with people who also do business with the state,” Senator Valesky said. “As public officials, we need to encourage transparency, not hide from it.”

The agreed-upon legislation also revamps current ethics law by creating the independent Legislative Office of Ethics Investigation to oversee legislative ethics, reinstating an independent state commission on lobbying and increasing disclosure requirements for lobbyists who have business relationships with public officials.

In addition, the Commission on Public Integrity would be replaced by a six-member board to oversee ethics compliance in the executive branch.

The push for ethics reform is the latest in a series of reform initiatives the Senate has adopted in the past year with Senator Valesky’s leadership, including empowering individual members through placing term limits on leadership and committee chairs, more equitable distribution of resources for all members, and increased transparency through a new Senate website.

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