



NEW YORK STATE SENATOR

Craig M. Johnson

## Senator Johnson's Temporary Retail Permit Legislation Signed into Law

CRAIG M. JOHNSON August 26, 2010

| ISSUE: **ALCOHOL**

Senator Craig M. Johnson, (D-Nassau), scored a victory for small businesses on Long Island and across New York State when his legislation to enact a system to counteract the infamous liquor license backlog at the State Liquor Authority was signed into law.

The measure, (S.6231C), establishes a one-year pilot program to create a temporary retail permit system that will help businesses get up and running without being affected by the notoriously long wait.

While crafting this legislation, Senator Johnson heard horror stories from owners of gas stations, restaurants, grocery stores, and other businesses who have been hurt by the inability to serve and sell alcohol while the SLA spent months processing their permit applications.

"We've created a responsible system where businesses can get off the ground without being harmed by factors beyond their control," Senator Johnson said. "Businesses will have the opportunity to operate at their full potential sooner and help strengthen their local economies."

The SLA backlog became so institutionalized that the state Inspector General raided its offices last year amid widespread allegations that employees were soliciting bribes to speed up applications. Dennis Rosen was confirmed as the new chairman for the SLA with a mandate to clean up the authority. Among his first tasks was to help Senator Johnson develop the temporary permit system.

The new system now allows for businesses to apply for a 90-day temporary permit, to be followed by a 30-day extension if the application has yet to be processed. This program applies to communities outside of New York City.

Applicants for a temporary permit must undergo electronic fingerprinting and, like those holding a permanent liquor license, cannot have been convicted of a felony crime.

This legislation was sponsored in the Assembly by Western New York Assemblyman Robin Schimminger. It takes effect in October