



NEW YORK STATE SENATOR

Mark Grisanti

Sen. Grisanti Named as one of this Weeks Winners in City Hall News

MARK GRISANTI March 4, 2011

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Winners & Losers, March 4 Edition

By City Hall

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Ken Raske – Sure, George Gresham and 1199 were huge winners coming out of the Medicaid Redesign Team taskforce vote. But perhaps no sector would benefit more from the medical malpractice reforms in Andrew Cuomo's budget amendments than hospitals, which have been crippled by rising insurance costs. The result not only demonstrates the savvy of 1199 for cozying up to the Cuomo administration, but the savvy of the Greater New York Health Care Association, an industry group headed by Ken Raske, which has wisely cozied up to the powerful union. Shelly Silver will still have the final say. But for now, it's the trial lawyers' lobby that's looking like it's in critical condition.

Mark Grisanti – The freshman state senator passed his first bill, he passed it on an issue that couldn't be moved last year, and the vote was almost unanimous. The UB 2020 bill, which gives the University of Buffalo more freedom over tuition rates and economic development initiatives, is aimed at replacing manufacturing jobs that have fled western New York. The Democrat-turned-

Republican who eked out a narrow win last fall is going to need all the help he can get to hold onto the normally non-GOP turf he yanked from Antoine Thompson, and this seems likely to prove a solid start. If the Assembly approves the bill, the rookie's first hit could be a home run

Denis Hughes – As unions continue to take hits elsewhere around the country, they had a good week in New York, thanks to Andrew Cuomo, their presumed nemesis. Cuomo threw public sector unions a bone by cutting outside contractors 10 percent. He introduced a bill to extend unemployment benefits for 166,000 workers, a top priority for the AFL-CIO. Most importantly, Cuomo put the kibosh on Mike Bloomberg's "last in, first out" bill in favor of his own, a move that was praised by Hughes and other labor leaders. There will be tough weeks ahead for Hughes and labor movement, but for now they can celebrate, perhaps with an expensive quail dinner—or maybe not.

Ed Koch – A well-rested Ed Koch descended on the capital this week like a tornado, whirling through meetings and press conferences at a pace most men half his 86 years would find exhausting. Not only did the former mayor get Shelly Silver to introduce an independent redistricting reform bill in the Assembly, but apparently Koch's "hero/enemy" schtick—as well as the threat of angry robocalls in their districts—was enough to spur over 70 lawmakers, Democratic and Republican, to sign on to the bill. Dean Skelos demurred, but Koch, ever the wily politician, held his fire, knowing that you get more flies with honey than with vinegar. Either way, Koch has come a long way since he convened the first meeting of New York Uprising around this time last year. How's he doing? Not bad, Mr. Mayor. Not bad at all.

Bill de Blasio – The public advocate must have had a few flashbacks to his old Council days this week, when the first piece of legislation he sponsored since leaving the chamber a year ago won approval. But whether the HEAT act, which penalizes landlords who fail to provide heat to their tenants, will warm enough hearts to make a mayoral run more plausible to still uncertain. To that end, de Blasio cast himself as school savior this week, releasing a report

that exposed flaws in the city's decision to close P.S. 114 in Brooklyn, and staging a rally in support of the school. Shockingly, the move worked. And while de Blasio was not the only pol to rally in support of the school—as Charles Barron bluntly noted—the public advocate's comprehensive data, data and more data made it hard for the city to say no.