



NEW YORK STATE SENATOR

Patrick M. Gallivan

# **Senator Gallivan Passes Legislation Modernizing Social Services Hearing Process**

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May 23, 2011

ISSUE:

- [Social Services](#)



#### PLAN UTILIZES ELECTRONIC MEDIA TO SAVE TAX DOLLARS, FIND EFFICIENCIES

Senator Patrick M. Gullivan (R,C,I – 59th District), announced today that the State Senate recently passed legislation (S.4828) he authored, giving local social service districts increased opportunities to utilize electronic media in Fair Hearing proceedings. The legislation is designed to save both time and money, while making the social service hearing process more efficient.

“The evidentiary process for conducting social service hearings has largely gone unchanged for generations, ignoring significant technological advances that have occurred over the years,” said Gullivan. “Local social service districts in New York City alone print an average of 1.7 million pages of paper per month to meet current requirements. This is simply a waste of resources, both financial and human.”

The current Fair Hearing process requires the New York City Human Resources Administration to provide three hard copies of single-sided client documents at every fair hearing, with the hearing officer, the appellant and the agency representative each receiving copies.

Gullivan’s legislation would modernize the process by implementing the Electronic Evidence Packet System, whereby, evidentiary documents are submitted in electronic format and then transmitted during Fair Hearings to three separate monitors in state hearing rooms for the hearing officer, appellant, and agency

representatives.

“This long overdue update of the fair hearing process will obviously save tax dollars, but just as important, it will eliminate administrative bureaucracy, enabling social service agencies and staff to focus on improving services and resolving conflicts prior to the hearing process,” said Gallivan. “Government should constantly be looking for ways to do things better, to achieve efficiencies, and to lower its expenses.”

While reducing the time, effort, and cost of producing evidentiary packages and bringing local social service districts in-line with practices long common to the private sector, this legislation will have the “ancillary benefit of also reducing the cost of transporting documents from human resource centers to state hearing rooms, and from state hearing rooms to Albany,” according to Gallivan.

As legislative session continues Senator Gallivan, Chairman of the Senate Social Services Committee, will continue seeking innovative ways to save tax dollars, while continuing to provide the necessary services many New Yorkers rely on.