



NEW YORK STATE SENATOR

Jack M. Martins

## Senator Martins and Assemblywoman Schimel Take Part in League of Women Voters Forum

JACK M. MARTINS    October 7, 2011

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New York State Senator Jack M. Martins and Assemblywoman Michelle Schimel both accepted an invitation to appear at a forum hosted by the Nassau County chapter of the League of Women Voters at the Manhasset Library. True to form, the League hosted an informative session as Senator Martins and Assemblywoman Schimel spoke about a variety of important issues affecting the state and our local communities.

Senator Martins and Assemblywoman Schimel have worked well together in Albany in a bipartisan way for the communities they represent. The two legislators agree on some of the most important issues raised on the forum including the environment.

An issue that is expected to come up in the future is hydro-fracking, a process by which natural gas is extracted from a shale in upstate New York. Although there stands to be an economic benefit from extracting this energy source, there are concerns about what the process may do to drinking water. It is a concern that is shared by both Senator Martins and Assemblywoman Schimel. "Economic benefit should not trump safety," said Senator Martins.

Other questions addressed issues such as public pensions, economic development, state mandates and taxes. In the area of mandate relief, Senator Martins and Assemblywoman Schimel sponsored legislation to relieve school districts from a transportation mandate forced school districts to spend money on transportation that wasn't being used. The mandate relief measure will provide significant savings. They hope to see more mandate relief from New York State to ease the burden on school districts and municipalities.

One question posed concerned the costs of public pensions. Senator Martins said he expects pension reform to be a topic of discussion in the upcoming session in Albany since pension costs are having a significant impact on the budgets of local governments and school districts.

The final question of the forum asked the two legislators what project they would most like to work on in the future. As a leader in gun control issues, Assemblywoman Schimel said she wants to work toward a law for micro-stamping to help solve crimes where semi-automatic handguns are used but not found at the crime scene. Senator Martins said he would like to see economic development with an emphasis on downtown revitalization in an effort to expand the tax base and create jobs.

“I want to thank the League of Women Voters for sponsoring this forum where Michelle and I can discuss our work in Albany and here in our local communities. We are working well together and are looking forward to continuing to get things done for our communities,” Senator Martins said.