



NEW YORK STATE SENATOR

Patrick M. Gallivan

Senator Gallivan Votes in Favor of Public Assistance Integrity Act

Patrick M. Gallivan

June 18, 2013

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Legislation Designed to Protect Taxpayers Against Abuse of Public Assistance

Senator Patrick Gallivan (R-C-I, Elma) today voted in favor of the “Public Integrity Act” (S. 966), which protects taxpayers by cutting down on the abuse of Electronic Benefit Transfer (EBT) cards by prohibiting welfare recipients from using the money associated with the card for the purchase of alcohol, tobacco, lottery tickets and gambling, as well as strip clubs.

“As a former law enforcement officer, I have seen firsthand the importance of helping those in need while maintaining the integrity of society,” said Senator Gallivan. “By passing this common-sense reform, we can ensure families get the help that they need while also protecting taxpayers from unnecessary abuses associated EBT cards.”

EBT cards work like a debit card for welfare recipients and contain funds for Food Stamps as well as Cash Assistance. Food Stamps are heavily regulated as to what can be purchased, however Cash Assistance has no regulations, allowing recipients to purchase alcohol, cigarettes, gambling, or even lap dances at a strip club. Under the Public Integrity Act, EBT cards would be more heavily regulated, limiting where and what the cards could be used for.

The “Public Integrity Act” would also ensure that New York State qualifies for the federal funding that mandates each state must enact a fraud prevention system by February 2014. The Senate overwhelmingly passed this important legislation today and urges the Assembly to do so as well.