



NEW YORK STATE SENATOR

Joseph A. Griffo

Griffo Helps Pass Women's Equality Agenda

JOSEPH A. GRIFFO January 12, 2015

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Demonstrating his continued commitment to creating equality for women in the Empire State, Sen. Joseph A. Griffo's first legislative action in 2015 was to vote in support of the Women's Equality Agenda.

"In Governor Cuomo's 2013 State of the State address, he challenged us to reject institutional and cultural norms and make New York a leader in creating equality for women," said Griffo, R-Rome. "I'm tremendously proud that me and my Senate colleagues have now met this challenge for each of the last the years."

The eight bills passed today would stop human trafficking (S.7), ensure equal pay for equal work (S.1), combat sexual harassment in the workplace (S.2), end gender-based discrimination in employment (S.4), housing (S.5) and credit (S.3), require reasonable accommodations for pregnant women in the workplace (S.8) and provide stronger protections for victims of domestic violence (S.6).

“We need to get tough on human trafficking. Buying and selling human beings is inhumane. It’s disgusting. And the legislation in this package could limit its prominence in the Empire State,” said Griffo.

“We need to ensure equal pay for equal work. Women earn 84 cents for every \$1 men earn. Our legislation would prohibit employees from paying disparate amounts for the same job due to gender,” he added.

“We also shouldn’t let employers discriminate against women who have children or are pregnant. If you’re good enough for the job or the promotion, employers should not factor in your family status. We have these protections for credit and housing. Let’s extend them to employment,” said the legislator.

“And if a court agrees that you were discriminated against based on your gender, you should be allowed to recover attorney’s fees. Otherwise, we’re discouraging potential victims from obtaining justice,” added Griffo.

“If your boss is sexually harassing you, you should have the ability to report that – regardless of the company’s size. We want to close a loophole that currently prohibits those harassed from complaining to the state if the business employs four or fewer people,” he said.

“We need to make sure that landlords aren’t discriminating against victims of domestic violence, whether it be by denying a rental entirely or increasing the price. Our laws should help domestic violence victims stay away from their abuser, not put them back in the same situation because of housing concerns,” said Griffo.

“Our last piece of legislation would allow for electronic filing of orders of protection. It better protects alleged victims and recognizes that modern conveniences can be utilized to make the process more efficient.”

Griffo noted the state Assembly has declined twice to consider these bills separately, even though several women’s groups and even the bills’ own sponsors implored the leadership to reconsider.

“These bills will greatly improve the lives of women in New York, but they’re being held up for purely political purposes,” said Griffo. “I respectfully ask my colleagues in the Assembly to prioritize women’s rights ahead of playing games and join us in approving these bills so they can become law.”

