



NEW YORK STATE SENATOR

James L. Seward

Senate Advances Seward Bill Dubbing Herkimer Diamond The Official State Mineral

JAMES L. SEWARD June 17, 2015

| ISSUE: **ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT, RECREATION AND TOURISM**

ALBANY, 06/17/15 – The New York State Senate today passed legislation ([S.5866](#)) that would designate the Herkimer Diamond as the official state mineral. The legislation, sponsored by Senator James L. Seward (R/C/I – Oneonta), celebrates the distinctive quartz crystals from the Mohawk Valley.

“The Herkimer Diamond is known worldwide and is no doubt worthy of being dubbed the official mineral of New York State,” said Senator Seward. **“Residents of the Mohawk Valley take great pride in the discovery of this unique gem and are extremely pleased that it is in line to be added to the state’s elite roster of items with the ‘official’ state designation.”**

Doubly terminated quartz crystals from the Mohawk Valley are commonly referred to as Herkimer Diamonds due to their diamond shape and are unique to New York. They are known around the world as some of the clearest quartz mineral specimens found to date.

“The Empire State has a proud tradition of recognizing features that make it unique. The Herkimer Diamond, which was formed almost 500 million years ago, is renowned for its beauty and has even been rumored to have mystic powers. Certainly, when it comes to minerals – everyone digs the Herkimer Diamond,” added Seward.

New York State has previously designated an official gemstone (garnet), fossil (sea scorpion), shell (bay scallop), bush (lilac), salt water fish (striped bass), and reptile (snapping turtle), to name a few. Currently, there is no official state mineral.

“The Mohawk Valley is filled with treasured connections to the past and exceptional tourist attractions that draw thousands to our region. The official state mineral designation for the Herkimer Diamond will add to our uniqueness and provide yet another reason for families and tourists to visit, bolstering our local economy,” concluded Seward.

The bill has been previously approved by the senate on several occasions, but has not been acted on by the state assembly. It has once again been sent to the assembly where companion legislation (A.5540) is sponsored by Assemblyman Steve Englebright and co-sponsored by Assemblyman Marc Butler, Assemblyman Anthony Brindisi, and Assemblywoman Claudia Tenney.