



NEW YORK STATE SENATOR

Andrea Stewart-Cousins

## Important Bills Passed This Week: State Workforce Injury Reduction Act, Reducing Costs For Localities, and More!

ANDREA STEWART-COUSINS June 19, 2015



### IMPORTANT BILLS PASSED THIS WEEK

**Andrea Stewart-Cousins**  
*Senate Democratic Leader*  
*New York State Senator, 35th District*

**Expanding Eligibility for Admission to the NYS Veterans Home:** Senate bill, S.305A, sponsored Democratic Senator Adriano Espaillat, broadens the requirements for admissions to the New York State veterans' nursing home by including veterans who served in combat operations during our most recent conflicts and wars. These facilities provide veterans with valuable rehabilitation to improve their quality of life when they return home. Previously, eligibility was only allowed for veterans who served honorably in World War II, Korea, and Vietnam.

**State Workforce Injury Reduction Act:** Currently, the president of the New York State Department of Civil Service produces an annual report describing occupational injuries, illnesses, and workers' compensation claims for each state agency. However, there is no requirement that agencies respond to the report with a plan for reducing the kinds of injuries identified in the report. The "State Workforce Injury Reduction Act" (S.2842-A), introduced by Democratic State Senator Joseph Addabbo, would ensure that agencies work with employee representatives to examine injuries to their employees and formulate ways to prevent similar injuries from occurring in the future.

**Studying Farmers Markets' And Helping Eradicate Food Deserts:** Residents in food deserts have higher rates of cardiovascular disease, obesity and diabetes and would benefit from increased access to farmer's markets and the variety of nutritious foods they offer. Senate bill S.4945, sponsored by Democratic State Senator Leroy Comrie, would amend the reporting requirement of the farmers' market program to include the number, nature and geographic location of all farmers' markets; a description of food deserts in New York; an assessment of successes and failures in establishing farmers markets in food deserts; recommendations for expanding access to farmers markets in food deserts; and a list of funding sources for farmers markets in food deserts.

**Reducing Costs For Localities:** This legislation, S.999, introduced by Democratic Senator Martin Dilan, will remove limitations on county highway superintendents to rent road machinery, and town highway superintendents to contract with a municipality, district, district corporation, school district, community college or unit of the State University. Under the current law, county highway superintendents may contract with entities within the particular county and a town highway superintendent may only contract with such entities providing they are located in the town. This bill would remove limitations on shared services and permit contracting with government entities for shared services even if not located in

the county or the town.