



NEW YORK STATE SENATOR

Elaine Phillips

## Senator Phillips Votes For Ethics Reforms to Crack Down on Public Corruption

ELAINE PHILLIPS January 31, 2017

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Senator Elaine Phillips (R-Manhasset) recently voted in favor of two ethics reform measures aimed at cracking down on public corruption. The measures would allow courts to strip pensions from public officials convicted of felony corruption, as well as help ensure that legislators are not earning outside income in conflict with their official duties.

“Public trust matters. People are tired of scandals and rightfully demand reforms to strengthen accountability. Taking these necessary steps will help send the message that corruption will not be tolerated and public officials convicted of corruption will pay a more serious price for betraying the public trust,” said Senator Phillips, Chair of the Senate’s Ethics Committee.

Both the Senate and Assembly passed legislation, cosponsored by Senator Phillips, that would empower the court to revoke or reduce the pension benefits of a public officer convicted of a felony directly related to his or her duties. Public officers include elected officials of all levels of government, judges, direct gubernatorial appointees, municipal managers, department heads, chief fiscal officers and policy-makers.

Because the measure would change the New York State Constitution, it must also be approved through a public referendum before it can take effect. The measure will appear on the general election ballot in November for voter approval.

Additionally, the Senate and Assembly passed a joint legislative resolution requiring any member of the Legislature earning more than \$5,000 income through outside employment to submit a written request for an advisory opinion to the Legislative Ethics Commission. The Commission will determine whether the employment is consistent with the New York State Public Officers Law.