



NEW YORK STATE SENATOR

Jose M. Serrano

## Senator Serrano and Senate Democrats Propose New York State Service Corps

JOSE M. SERRANO June 9, 2017

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Senator Serrano joined his colleagues in the Senate Democratic Conference in standing up for New Yorkers in response to President Trump's plan to eliminate the AmeriCorps national service program. To address this situation, the Senate Democratic Conference announced a series of bills to create the New York State Service Corps. The new state organization would continue the long-standing tradition of public service established by the AmeriCorps and would extend student loan forgiveness to participating New Yorkers.

President Trump's budget eliminates the federal AmeriCorps program – a domestic national service program modeled on the PeaceCorps that allows young people to work on public service projects in exchange for help in paying for college. In New York, this program annually enables some 5,200 people to perform public service projects and receive grants for tuition or loan repayment. An additional 17,000 New York State seniors participating with AmeriCorps to perform community service in high-needs areas around the state would see their service programs cut under President Trump's proposals.

Senator Serrano's Bill S.3452, would establish the New York state history fellowship program.

"New York State is home to some of the most culturally and historically significant destinations anywhere in the nation. They provide tremendous educational opportunities, and serve as a major economic engine as well. My bill will create a commission of experts and a state history fellowship program to preserve and promote New York's rich history. At a time when the federal government appears to be turning away from our commitment to the arts, culture and history, it's important that New York steps forward and takes a stand on these critically important issues." - Senator José M. Serrano

Other bills included in the package are, Senate Bill S.146, sponsored by Senate Democratic Policy Group Chair, Senator Daniel Squadron, to establish the New York State Service Corps and Senate Bill S.6440, sponsored by Senator Toby Ann Stavisky, to establish service corps education grant to be used for tuition costs or loan repayment.

New York currently has a small service corps, the Excelsior Conservation Corps, which only had 41 individuals in last year's graduating class. The Senate Democratic proposal would dramatically increase the number of New Yorkers able to participate in service projects to 250 initial spots. Additionally, the current program offers tuition and loan forgiveness grants of \$2,907, while the Senate Democratic plan would increase those grants to \$3,500.