



NEW YORK STATE SENATOR

Fred Akshar

## 1.9.19 - Senator Fred Akshar Cosponsors Anti-Corruption Constitutional Amendment

FRED AKSHAR January 9, 2019

| ISSUE: **ETHICS**, **ETHICS REFORM**



Senator Fred Akshar is cosponsoring legislation this week sponsored by Democrat Senator Liz Krueger to establish a new, non-partisan and independent regulatory and investigatory body to oversee the legislative and executive branches of state government.

The Anti-Corruption Constitutional Amendment (S.594) would replace the Joint Commission on Public Ethics and the Legislative Ethics Commission (JCOPE), which are both comprised

solely of individuals appointed by the legislature and the executive branches and have been criticized for a lack of independence and transparency.

“It's incumbent on the State Legislature to come together to put forth good ideas and good policy, whether they come from Republicans or Democrats,” said Senator Fred Akshar. “The people of New York deserve true ethics reform in state government and for too long state government has come up short. “I'm proud to partner with my colleagues on both sides of the aisle to help create a truly independent authority to oversee government ethics, and I'm urging the Governor Cuomo and the New York State Assembly to join us in support of this legislation.”

The legislation would create the Commission on State Government Integrity to root out and tackle corruption in state government.

Unlike JCOPE and the Legislative Ethics Commission, which are comprised of legislative and gubernatorial appointments, the new commission would have the majority of its 9 members appointed by the judiciary. Five members would be appointed by Chief Judge of the State of New York and the presiding justices of the appellate divisions, two members would be appointed by legislative conference leaders and the final two would be chosen jointly by the governor, comptroller and attorney general. Anyone having served as a state employee, lobbyist or political party official in the past year years would be prohibited from being appointed.

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*"If we're truly committed to clearing the away the clouds of corruption and partisanship that have hung over previous ethics reform efforts in Albany, any 'independent' ethics panel must truly be independent of undo influence from politicians in power, no matter their party," said Akshar."*

The new commission would have the power issue subpoenas, receive sworn testimony and to make criminal prosecution referrals to a district attorney, attorney general or a U.S. attorney.

To become law, the bill requires a constitutional change and must pass both houses of the State Legislature before going before the public as a referendum at the polls. If the referendum passes, the Governor would not have to sign it into law.

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## RELATED LEGISLATION

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### 2019-S594

- 
- Introduced
  - - In Committee Assembly
    - In Committee Senate

- ○ On Floor Calendar Assembly
  - On Floor Calendar Senate

- ○ Passed Assembly
  - Passed Senate

- Delivered to Governor

- Signed By Governor

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Relating to state government integrity

January 07, 2019

In Senate Committee [Judiciary](#)

Sponsored by [Liz Krueger](#)

Do you support this bill?