



NEW YORK STATE SENATOR

Pamela Helming

## Senator Helming: Legislation to End Pay-to-Play a Step in the Right Direction

SENATOR PAM HELMING March 12, 2019

| ISSUE: **PAY-TO-PLAY, CAMPAIGN FINANCE REFORM**

GENEVA – Senator Pam Helming today announced legislation she supports to end pay-to-play state contracting has passed the Senate. The legislation bans campaign contributions from vendors who either are seeking state contracts, have been awarded state contracts, or are lobbying for such an opportunity. The bill (S.3167) recently passed the Senate with unanimous, bipartisan support, and it will now go to the Assembly, where it is currently being considered by the Assembly Election Committee.

“Many recent court cases have highlighted the need to bring more transparency to the state bidding process. We need to clean up Albany and restore the public’s trust in state government. Passing legislation to put a stop to pay-to-play politics is a good start. Those who do business honestly should be rewarded, and all businesses deserve a fair shot when they are bidding. There is much more we must do to regain the people’s confidence, but this legislation starts us down that path. I applaud my colleagues on both sides of the aisle for supporting this measure, and I urge my Assembly colleagues to pass it soon,” Senator Helming said.

This legislation would reduce improper influence of the state contracting process and increase its fairness by banning campaign contributions from a company seeking state

contracts to leaders with authority over such contracts during a restricted vendor contribution period. At minimum, this period would last from the time a request for proposals (RFP) is issued to the time a contract is awarded. Prospective vendors would be barred from making contributions during this period when responding to an RFP and bidding for a contract. For the winning vendor, the period would last for an additional six months beyond the awarding of the contract. A vendor lobbying to create an opportunity to provide goods and services through a state contract would also be prohibited from making contributions during this period.

New York State government has more 50,000 contracts worth billions of dollars with companies that provide products and services across numerous industries. Allegations of bid rigging of contracts in New York have led to indictments and trials of company executives and state officials in recent times. Currently, when a company presents its products and services to a government entity, it may also make campaign contributions to leaders overseeing that entity. This may unfairly influence the state contract process or create a perception of improper influence.

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#### RELATED LEGISLATION

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### **2019-S3167**

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- 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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Relates to government vendor contributions

February 04, 2019

In Senate Committee Elections

Sponsored by Zellnor Myrie

Do you support this bill?