

Dear Neighbor,

First and foremost, I would like to thank the constituents of the 29th Senate District, which covers part of the Bronx, East Harlem, Roosevelt Island, Yorkville, Central Park, and the Upper West Side, for allowing me to represent all of you in the New York State Senate. This past legislative session I was appointed to the leadership position of Chair of the Senate Democratic Conference. This is a tremendous honor, and I look forward to continuing to push for the progressive issues that we all care about. Over the past few months we've seen some victories on important issues, but much work remains to be done.

As the Ranking Member on the Committee on Cultural Affairs, Tourism, Parks & Recreation, I pushed for increased funding for greatly needed capital improvements for our wonderful State Parks system. Working with my colleagues, and under the leadership of Governor Cuomo, this year's enacted state budget will include increased funding aimed at tackling the long backlog of critical repairs and improvements needed at our State Parks. I remain a strong believer that our parks and cultural attractions are a major economic generator for our state. Tourism provides a much needed economic boost for industries like hotels and restaurants across our state, and keeping our parks and arts institutions strong will pay major dividends for our state's economy.

I was proud to fight for the NY SAFE Act, which brought common sense gun control laws to New York State. Far too often we hear of tragic stories regarding gun violence at the hands of criminals who found it too easy to get their hands on a gun or assault weapons. The NY SAFE Act will make it harder for criminals to get guns by toughening licensing requirements and creating a state-wide database for law enforcement to utilize.

Looking forward there is much work to be done. While the Senate achieved passage of most of the points outlined in the Women's Equality Agenda, we did not pass the full 10 Point Plan as I had hoped. I pledge to continue to fight for full equality and reproductive rights for the women of New York. Hard working immigrants in New York deserve the tools they need to achieve the American Dream, that's why I will continue to fight for the DREAM Act in our state until it becomes a reality. I look forward to continuing my push for Member Item (legislative grants) Reform. I am the author of legislation in the Senate (S920) that would reform this much-abused system and make it more transparent. Campaign Finance Reform is another critical issue left unresolved. I fully support reforming our outdated campaign finance laws, and including public financing to level the playing field for candidates.

Last but not least, I remain a staunch opponent to the unsafe practice of hydrofracking. Our environment and water supply is much too precious to risk by allowing fracking to occur in New York State. Scientific data continues to prove that fracking is unsafe and extremely harmful, and I will continue to fight to ensure that it never happens.

If you have any questions, comments or concerns, please don't hesitate to contact my office. All my contact information is listed above, and my staff and I stand ready to assist you. If you would like to receive email updates, please visit my website or send an email at the address listed. We'd love to hear from you!

Yours in service,



Senator José M. Serrano

New York State Senate, Albany, NY 12247

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29th Senate District

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Querido Vecino:

En primer lugar, me gustaría darles las gracias a los constituyentes del Distrito 29, que cubre partes del Bronx, East Harlem, Roosevelt Island, Yorkville, Central Park, y el Upper West Side, por permitirme representarlos a todos en el Senado del Estado de Nueva York. En esta pasada sesión legislativa fui nombrado Presidente de la Conferencia Demócrata del Senado, una posición de liderazgo. Esto es un gran honor y espero poder seguir trabajando para empujar las cuestiones progresistas por cuales todos nos preocupamos. En los últimos meses hemos visto algunas victorias sobre cuestiones importantes, pero aún queda mucho trabajo por hacer.

Como el Miembro de Mayor Rango en el Comité de Asuntos Culturales, Turismo, Parques y Recreación, defendí el aumento de la financiación para mejorar nuestros maravillosos parques estatales. De trabajo con mis colegas, y bajo el liderazgo del Gobernador Cuomo, el presupuesto estatal aprobado de este año incluye el aumento de la financiación destinada a la lucha contra los retrasos de reparaciones críticas necesarias en nuestros parques estatales. Sigo siendo un firme creyente de que nuestros parques y atracciones culturales son importantes generadores económicos para nuestro estado. El turismo proporciona un impulso muy necesario para las industrias como los hoteles y restaurantes en todo nuestro estado, y mantener nuestros parques e instituciones artísticas fuertes pagarán grandes dividendos económicos para la economía de nuestro estado.

Estoy orgulloso de luchar por el NY SAFE Act, que trajo las leyes de control de armas al estado de Nueva York. Demasiado a menudo oímos de historias trágicas sobre la violencia armada causada por criminales que lo encontraron demasiado fácil de tener en sus manos un arma de fuego. La Ley NY SAFE Act lo hará más difícil para los delincuentes obtener los requisitos de licencia.

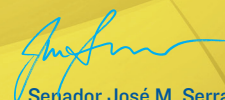
Mirando hacia el futuro, tenemos mucho trabajo por delante. Se logró la

aprobación de la mayoría de los puntos del orden de la Agenda de la Igualdad de la Mujer, pero no pasó completamente como yo esperaba. Me comprometo a seguir luchando por la igualdad y los derechos reproductivos de las mujeres de Nueva York. Los inmigrantes que trabajan duro en Nueva York merecen las herramientas necesarias para alcanzar el sueño americano, es por eso que voy a seguir luchando por el DREAM Act en nuestro estado hasta que se convierta en una realidad. Espero poder continuar con mi impulso para la reforma de los artículos de miembros. Yo soy el autor de la legislación en el Senado (S920) que reformaría el sistema que tanto se abusa y lo haría más transparente. Reforma del Financiamiento de Campañas es otro tema crítico sin resolver. Apoyo plenamente la reforma de nuestras leyes obsoletas del financiamiento de las campañas, y que incluye el financiamiento público.

Por último, pero no menos importante, voy a seguir siendo un firme opositor a la práctica insegura de fracturación hidráulica. Nuestro medio ambiente y el suministro de agua es demasiado precioso para arriesgarse al permitir esta práctica en el estado de Nueva York. Los datos científicos siguen demostrando que es inseguro y muy perjudicial, y voy a seguir luchando para que nunca suceda.

Si usted tiene alguna pregunta, comentario o inquietud, por favor no dude en ponerse en contacto con mi oficina. Toda mi información de contacto está en la lista anterior, y mi personal y yo estamos dispuestos a ayudarle. Si desea recibir información por email, por favor visite mi sitio web o envíe un correo electrónico a la dirección indicada. Nos encantaría saber de usted!

A su servicio,



Senador José M. Serrano

SENATOR SERRANO APPOINTED CHAIR OF THE DEMOCRATIC CONFERENCE

(Albany, NY) - Senator José M. Serrano was appointed to the leadership position of Chair of the Senate Democratic Conference by Democratic Leader Senator Andrea Stewart-Cousins. As Chair of the Conference, Serrano is the third highest Ranking Member of the Conference and is responsible for presiding over conference meetings.

“It is a privilege and an honor to be selected Chair of the Conference,” said Senator Serrano. “This tremendous opportunity has allowed me to fight harder for my constituents. Over the years it has been a pleasure to work with Senator Stewart-Cousins, and now under her leadership I will continue to work together with my colleagues to put forth a progressive agenda that speaks to the needs of New Yorkers across this great state. I am confident that the Democratic Conference will continue to lead the fight on important issues such as campaign finance reform, gun control, the expansion of reproductive rights for women, and much needed environmental protections like banning hydrofracking,” concluded Serrano.



SENATOR SERRANO FIGHTS FOR STRONGER GUN CONTROL LAWS: STATEMENT ON PASSAGE OF THE NY SAFE ACT



(Albany, NY) - Senator Serrano was a proud supporter of the NY SAFE Act, which passed the New York State Senate and was signed into law by Governor Cuomo. Currently, it is the most expansive gun control legislation in the country. This comprehensive legislation contains many gun-control measures that the Senator and the Democratic Conference have long advocated for.

“I am proud to support the NY SAFE Act which will ban assault weapons, strengthen license requirements, and create a state-wide database for law enforcement to utilize,” said Senator Serrano. “My colleagues and I in the Senate Democratic Conference have continually pushed for many of these measures and this is an important step towards curbing gun violence. I

applaud Governor Cuomo for advocating for the reform of our existing gun control laws and to Senate Democratic Conference leader Andrea-Stewart Cousins for ensuring the passage of progressive legislation that New Yorkers demand.”

Senator Serrano has long supported legislation that will strengthen our gun control laws and ensure weapons are kept out of the wrong hands. In addition to the measures enacted in the NY SAFE Act, Serrano supports S675, a bill that requires all handgun ammunition to be microstamped, and S1915, a bill that prohibits guns from being sold without child-proof features.

SENATOR SERRANO AND ASSEMBLYWOMAN GALEF CONTINUE FIGHT FOR REVAMP OF MEMBER ITEM SYSTEM

(Albany, NY) - Senator José M. Serrano and Assemblywoman Sandy Galef continue to call for a complete overhaul of the member item system in light of persistent abuse. Member items, or legislative grants, is money that is given to members of the New York State legislature through the state budget for local community organizations. Historically these funds have had very little oversight and no formal vetting process, which unfortunately opens the door for abuse. Serrano and Galef introduced legislation that will change this system by enhancing transparency and eliminating conflicts of interest. Dedicated to providing oversight and transparency, Serrano and Galef urged their colleagues to pass their legislation, A641/S920, which will set very specific rules for how these funds are distributed and tracked.

“New Yorkers have called for government reform in many different areas, and this bill provides a common sense approach to this issue by adding layers of scrutiny and transparency to a process that has traditionally been shrouded in mystery,” said Serrano. “If passed and signed into law, this bill will inspire public confidence by ensuring that taxpayer dollars are being allocated for worthy causes that have a direct community benefit in the areas that need it most.”

The legislation, which has bi-partisan support, will promote fairness and transparency by including a vetting process to guarantee member items are used for legitimate purposes. The bill states that member items will not be distributed when a conflict of interest exists between the legislator designating the member item and the potential recipient. This legislation will require each legislator to sign a conflict of interest form under perjury of law, therefore increasing the individual legislator's accountability when distributing member items.

SENATOR SERRANO JOINS OTHER ELECTED OFFICIALS IN FIGHT FOR RESIDENT INPUT & TRANSPARENCY IN NYCHA INFILL PROCESS

(New York, NY) - Senator José M. Serrano joined City Council Members Melissa Mark-Viverito, Rosie Mendez, and Margaret Chin in a press conference on the steps of City Hall to demand that the New York City Housing Authority (NYCHA) include residents in the Infill Development process. The infill development plan is a current proposal by NYCHA to lease land on open spaces within NYCHA developments to developers, who would then build private housing developments on the sites. NYCHA claims that this will allow them to raise revenue for long overdue repairs and maintenance within public housing. Senator Serrano maintains that NYCHA residents should be involved in the process.



“The residents of NYCHA, along with other members of the community and local representatives, should have a say in what gets built on this land,” said Serrano. “That is why I’m fighting to ensure that there is an open and transparent process that allows the public to weigh in and have their voices heard and respected,” continued Serrano.

NYCHA has targeted thirteen sites in eight public housing developments in New York City. These developments encompass 11,037 apartment units housing 25,031 residents for private, market-rate residential development with affordable components. The proposal, offering 99-year ground leases of the NYCHA-owned land to private developers, was designed by NYCHA to raise revenue in order to pay for much-needed repairs across NYCHA-owned properties.

SENATOR JOSÉ M. SERRANO STANDS WITH NEW YORKERS AGAINST FRACKING, FOOD & WATER WATCH, ELECTED OFFICIALS, AND OTHER ENVIRONMENTAL ADVOCATES AT A PRESS CONFERENCE ON THE STEPS OF CITY HALL TO FIGHT AGAINST HYDROFRACKING

(New York, NY) - Senator José M. Serrano joined advocates at a press conference on the steps of City Hall to highlight the numerous dangers associated with hydrofracking, a highly environmentally hazardous natural gas drilling method being considered for implementation in New York State. As of February, the New York State Department of Environmental Conservation (DEC) has delayed the issuing of the final Supplemental Generic Environmental Impact Statement (SGEIS) on high-volume hydrofracking in New York until the Department of Health (DOH) completes public review of the health impacts associated with hydrofracking.

“The decision by Governor Cuomo to delay hydrofracking until further public review is a step in the right direction, but it is my hope that this practice is not implemented in the state,” said Senator Serrano. “Countless studies link hydrofracking to contaminated groundwater, air pollution, illnesses, and death among wildlife. We must reject this practice that will undoubtedly endanger the well-being of countless New Yorkers and our environment. Our communities deserve better, and we must protect our state for generations to come. I strongly urge Governor Cuomo to take the next step in adhering to the concerns of health experts, environmental experts, and the general public and refuse to issue any hydrofracking permits in New York State.”



SENATOR SERRANO JOINS GOVERNOR CUOMO IN TOURISM SUMMIT TO EXPLORE WAYS TO BOOST NEW YORK ECONOMY

(Albany, NY) - As the Ranking Member of the State Senate's Cultural Affairs, Tourism, Parks and Recreation Committee, Senator Serrano joined Governor Cuomo for his Tourism Summit to discuss new and innovative ways to showcase New York's wonderful seasonal attractions in order to boost New York tourism statewide. Governor Cuomo moderated a discussion among industry leaders, business owners, and other stakeholders to discuss and develop new tourism initiatives.

"New York State is home to some of the best parks, lakes, beaches and cultural organizations in the country," said Senator Serrano. "Collectively, the tourism industry supports over 700,000 jobs statewide and acts as a critical economic engine across the state by contributing \$92 billion in economic activity. New York is already a major destination location for tourists all across the world, but we must continue to work together to develop new ideas to showcase the uniqueness that our state has to offer. Whether it's hiking along the scenic Appalachian Trail, or enjoying a wonderful theatrical production on Broadway, there truly is something for everyone in New York State."

Senator Serrano is a vocal advocate in support of our State parks and cultural organizations, with a full understanding that these sectors are major economic engines for our state. "We've seen how the arts and culture have been a driving force within the economy of New York City, and they're a major draw for businesses both large and small. This Tourism Summit will help explore ways to better promote artistic and cultural enclaves in other parts of New York State, and hopefully yield similar benefits to what we've seen in New York City," concluded Serrano.

SENATOR SERRANO JOINS PRINCE HARRY AND HARLEM RBI TO CELEBRATE NEW PROJECT COACH PROGRAM

(East Harlem, NY) - Senator Serrano joined Prince Harry (Prince Henry of Wales), New York Yankee first baseman Mark Teixeira and Harlem RBI to celebrate the announcement of The Royal Foundation's partnership with Harlem RBI's Project Coach, a youth mentorship program. Harlem RBI, a nonprofit organization designed to provide inner-city youth with opportunities, partnered with Prince Harry to implement Project Coach. This partnership focuses on helping local youths recognize their potential and realize their dreams through coaching opportunities.



"I am delighted to help celebrate the partnership between The Royal Foundation and Harlem RBI," said Senator Serrano. "It is important to provide our children with a warm environment where they can feel comfortable showcasing their talents. Many thanks to Prince Harry, on behalf of The Royal Foundation, and Harlem RBI for providing the youths of our community with an outstanding mentorship program that will benefit generations to come," concluded Serrano.

SENATOR SERRANO EXPRESSES DISAPPOINTMENT THAT THE SENATE DID NOT PASS FULL 10-POINT WOMEN'S EQUALITY AGENDA PLAN

(New York, NY) - Senator Serrano pushed for passage of the full package as outlined in the Women's Equality Agenda, a legislative package designed to provide equal rights for women in New York State. Following Governor Cuomo's State of the State address back in January, Serrano spoke about the need to bring New York's laws up-to-date in order to provide full equality for the hard working women in our state.

"It's hard to comprehend why, in this day and age, we still have not achieved full equality for the women of New York State," said Serrano. "The 10-point Women's Equality Agenda Plan is a commonsense approach to achieving equal pay, punishing sexual harassment in the workplace, ending family status discrimination, and protecting a woman's freedom of choice. I am happy that the Senate moved on many of the points of the Women's Equality Agenda Plan, but we didn't vote on one critical piece, the provision that would ensure reproductive rights for women. We cannot stop until all ten points become a reality," continued Serrano.

Prior to the vote, Senator Serrano joined Senator Liz Krueger, colleagues and advocates on the steps of City Hall for a press conference demanding a vote on the full ten point package. Serrano remains hopeful that ultimately will we have laws that ensure full equality for the women of our state.