



Annual Report 2025

New York State Senate Standing Committee on
**Cultural Affairs, Tourism, Parks and
Recreation**

Senator José M. Serrano

Chair

Senator Andrea Stewart-Cousins
President Pro Tempore
NYS Senate Majority Leader



JOSÉ M. SERRANO

Senator, 29th District

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**NEW YORK
STATE
SENATE**

ALBANY, NEW YORK 12247



CHAIR OF THE MAJORITY

CHAIRMAN

CULTURAL AFFAIRS, TOURISM,
PARKS AND RECREATION

COMMITTEES

AGING
ENVIRONMENTAL CONSERVATION
LIBRARIES
SOCIAL SERVICES
VETERANS, HOMELAND SECURITY AND
MILITARY AFFAIRS
WOMEN'S ISSUES

December 2025

The Honorable Andrea Stewart-Cousins
Temporary President and Majority Leader
New York State Senate
Albany, NY 12247

Dear Senator Stewart-Cousins:

I am pleased to transmit the Annual Report of the Senate's Standing Committee on Cultural Affairs, Tourism, Parks and Recreation for the 2025 Legislative Session. As Chair, I am proud to continue to lead our efforts to address important matters under my committee's jurisdiction.

During the 2025 Session, this Committee met three times in Session and reported twenty bills. The Committee also held a joint Arts Day forum in February 2025 with the Assembly Standing Committee on Tourism, Parks, Arts and Sports Development.

I thank my colleagues who served on the Committee for their efforts and support of the work that was done in the Committee this year, and I thank you for the continued support from the Majority Conference in the Committee's operations.

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads 'José M. Serrano'.

Sincerely,

New York State Senator José M. Serrano
29th Senate District
Chair of New York State Senate Standing Committee on Cultural Affairs,
Tourism, Parks and Recreation

2025 LEGISLATIVE SESSION REPORT

NEW YORK STATE SENATE STANDING COMMITTEE ON CULTURAL AFFAIRS, TOURISM, PARKS AND RECREATION

**Senator José M. Serrano,
Chairperson**

Committee Members

April N.M. Baskin

Jeremy A. Cooney

Michelle Hinchey

Jessica Scarcella-Spanton

James N. Tedisco

Pamela A. Helming

Committee Staff

Kathryn Kilichowski – Committee
Director and Clerk

Michael S. Press – Senior Counsel to the
Committee

Malik Dare – Finance Director to the
Committee

COMMITTEE JURISDICTION AND OVERVIEW

The New York State Senate Standing Committee on Cultural Affairs, Tourism, Parks and Recreation has legislative oversight responsibilities for issues concerning the State system of parks and historic sites, arts development, tourism initiatives, and advancing recreational opportunities for New Yorkers.

During the 2025 Legislative Session, sixty bills were referred to the Committee for its review. Of these bills, twenty were reported from the Committee, seventeen were passed by the Senate, and seven passed in both houses. This work was conducted through a series of three committee meetings.

In addition to its regular meetings, the Committee held a joint Arts Day forum in February 2025 with the Assembly Standing Committee on Tourism, Parks, Arts and Sports Development that examined testimony and perspectives of various arts disciplines and practitioners from across the State on the role that the arts and culture have in community development, diversity and inclusion, and education.

COMMITTEE HIGHLIGHTS

The following key bills were acted on by the Committee in 2025:

- **S.115A (CLEARE) Passed Senate.** This bill requires New York State arts and culture initiatives to increase consideration for diversity, equity and inclusion, racial and social justice, and cultural preservation within various programmatic criteria.
- **S.1062 (SERRANO) Passed Senate.** This bill requires New York State to develop criteria and guidelines to establish State designated arts and cultural districts.
- **S.1071 (SERRANO) Vetoed.** This bill directs the Commissioner of Parks, Recreation and Historic Preservation to establish the state parks passport program.
- **S.1376 (SERRANO) Chapter 421 of 2025.** This law makes it easier for farmers' markets to operate in New York State Parks by requiring the New York State Office of Parks, Recreation and Historic Preservation to promote them online, listing locations and times on their website, creating more local food access and farm support within parks.
- **S.1378 (SERRANO) Passed Senate.** This bill establishes education grants for museums, zoos, botanical gardens, aquariums and other cultural institutions located in low-income communities, or that provide educational services to students from such communities.
- **S.3161 (JACKSON) Chapter 542 of 2025.** This law moves the Amistad commission from the Department of State to the New York State Education Department.
- **S.7152A (CLEARE) Chapter 323 of 2025.** This law authorizes the New York State Council of the Arts to designate the Harlem Renaissance Cultural District.

PUBLIC HEARINGS, ROUNDTABLES & NOMINATIONS

Arts Day Forum – The Senate and Assembly held a joint Arts Day Forum in February 2025, where members from each house’s respective committee on arts and cultural development heard testimony from arts advocates, entrepreneurs, and educators, discussing the many roles that arts and culture play in our communities and how New York can continue supporting these endeavors. This forum consisted of three panels focusing on the themes of the arts as an economic engine, diversity and cultural tourism, and arts in education.

TWO HOUSE BILLS

BILL	SPONSOR	SUMMARY	SIGNIFICANT ACT
S.01071	SERRANO	Directs the commissioner of parks, recreation and historic preservation to establish the state parks passport program allowing visitors to state parks and historic sites to log their visits to such sites in a passport book or electronic application.	Vetoed Memorandum 78
S.01376	SERRANO	Encourages farmers' markets in state parks by posting related information, identifying opportunities and coordinating with other state agencies.	Chaptered 421
S.01467	SERRANO	Requires the Office of Parks, Recreation and Historic Preservation to establish standards for the closing of segments of trails on the Empire state trail, and provide notice of such closings to the public.	Vetoed Memorandum 46
S.03161	JACKSON	Moves the Amistad Commission from the department of state to the state education department.	Chaptered 542
S.04484	LIU	Authorizes the office of parks, recreation and historic preservation and the office of mental health to conduct a study pertaining to a proposed expansion of the Long Island Motor Parkway trail.	Substituted By A.6783 - Vetoed Memorandum 70
S.04722A	FAHY	Requires the empire state plaza art commission to examine the historical significance of major rivers in the state of New York in connection with renaming the agency buildings located at the empire state plaza; requires the governor to choose the new agency building names within 60 days after the commission's recommendation.	Substituted By A.1914 - Vetoed Memorandum 58
S.06367	RIVERA	Extends the expiration date of free one day admission to the zoological park to December 31, 2030.	Substituted By A.7601 - Chaptered 232
S.06903A	RYAN S	Designates the Scajaquada heritage area as a state designated heritage area.	Chaptered 426
S.07152A	CLEARE	Empowers the council on the arts to designate the Harlem Renaissance Cultural District.	Chaptered 323

SUMMARY OF COMMITTEE ACTIVITY

BILL	SPONSOR	SUMMARY	SIGNIFICANT ACT
S.00115A	CLEARE	Increases access to resources for culturally diverse arts and culture organizations that advocate for diversity, equity and inclusion, racial and social justice, and cultural preservation.	Passed the Senate
S.01057	SERRANO	Relates to the reporting of alienation of municipal parkland.	Passed the Senate
S.01062	SERRANO	Directs the council on the arts to establish criteria and guidelines for the establishment of state designated arts and cultural districts.	Passed the Senate
S.01067A	SERRANO	Establishes the New York state park adopt-a-trail stewardship program and the New York state park adopt-a-trail stewardship program fund.	Passed the Senate
S.01071	SERRANO	Directs the commissioner of parks, recreation and historic preservation to establish the state parks passport program allowing visitors to state parks and historic sites to log their visits to such sites in a passport book or electronic application.	Vetoed Memorandum 78
S.01376	SERRANO	Encourages farmers' markets in state parks by posting related information, identifying opportunities and coordinating with other state agencies.	Chaptered 421
S.01377	SERRANO	Creates a legislative task force on outdoor environmental education and recreation that will benefit residents of New York state by fostering stewardship and conservation of the environment, and an appreciation of the importance of the wise use of natural resources as well as acknowledgment of the health benefits of time spent in nature.	Passed the Senate

BILL	SPONSOR	SUMMARY	SIGNIFICANT ACT
S.01378A	SERRANO	Relates to the provision of financial assistance to museums, zoos, botanical gardens, aquariums and other cultural institutions located in low-income urban, suburban or rural communities, or that provide educational services to students from such communities.	Passed the Senate
S.01380A	SERRANO	Requires the department of environmental conservation and the department of health to establish certain standards related to the cleaning of playground equipment after pesticide exposure.	Passed the Senate
S.01467	SERRANO	Requires the Office of Parks, Recreation and Historic Preservation to establish standards for the closing of segments of trails on the Empire state trail, and provide notice of such closings to the public.	Vetoed Memorandum 46
S.03161	JACKSON	Moves the Amistad Commission from the department of state to the state education department.	Chaptered 542
S.03256A	COONEY	Increases the penalties for operating a snowmobile while intoxicated, doubles penalties for operators having .18 of one per centum or more by weight of alcohol in their blood, breath, urine, or saliva, and includes other operating while intoxicated convictions in sentencing considerations.	Passed the Senate
S.04484	LIU	Authorizes the office of parks, recreation and historic preservation and the office of mental health to conduct a study pertaining to a proposed expansion of the Long Island Motor Parkway trail.	Substituted By A.6783 - Vetoed Memorandum 70

BILL	SPONSOR	SUMMARY	SIGNIFICANT ACT
S.04722A	FAHY	Requires the empire state plaza art commission to examine the historical significance of major rivers in the state of New York in connection with renaming the agency buildings located at the empire state plaza; requires the governor to choose the new agency building names within 60 days after the commission's recommendation.	Substituted By A.1914 - Vetoed Memorandum 58
S.05400	SCARCELLA-SPANTON	Exempts operators of law enforcement and fire department vessels from laws which regulate vessels on the navigable waters of the state while such operators are in the course of responding to emergencies.	Passed the Senate
S.06367	RIVERA	Extends the expiration date of free one day admission to the zoological park to December 31, 2030.	Substituted By A.7601 - Chaptered 232
S.06903A	RYAN S	Designates the Scajaquada heritage area as a state designated heritage area.	Chaptered 426
S.07152A	CLEARE	Empowers the council on the arts to designate the Harlem Renaissance Cultural District.	Chaptered 323

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