

News from Senator George M. Borrello

57th Senate District

Representing Allegany, Cattaraugus, Chautauqua, and portions of Livingston County

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SENATOR GEORGE BORRELLO PROPOSES REFORMS TO NEW YORK STATE'S NOMINATIONS PROCESS

ALBANY – Citing the inadequate review period and vetting protocols of the current process for considering and confirming appointees to state boards, agencies and judicial posts, Senator George Borrello has proposed legislation that would reform the existing system to establish a minimum of a 60-day review period and an independent background investigation of nominees.

The measure would also establish funding for the majority and minority parties in both the Senate and Assembly to contract with third party entities to perform these investigations.

“Individuals appointed to serve on state boards, in agencies and judicial posts often make significant decisions that have can have an enormous impact on the lives of New Yorkers. Yet, despite the high stakes involved, nominations are typically pushed through during the end-of-session rush and are accompanied by only minimal supporting documents, such as a resume and questionnaire,” said Senator Borrello. “We are seeing that troubling scenario play out during this final week of the session.”

“Conducting a thorough review and making a sound judgement under such circumstances is nearly impossible. While most nominees are qualified, when those who are unqualified or have problematic backgrounds slip through, there can be lasting repercussions for our state.”

Senator Borrello cited several controversial decisions by the state Parole Board in recent years, including parole approvals for Herman Bell and Anthony Bottom, who were convicted of killing NYPD officers, and murderer-rapist Samuel Ayala.

“The current members of the state Parole Board have made horrendous decisions that raise legitimate concerns about their judgement, qualifications and fitness to serve in that capacity,” said Borrello. “They have released inmates convicted of society’s most heinous crimes. Now those criminals are walking around as free men, while the families of their victims are left to mourn the irreplaceable loss of their loved ones.”

“Under the measure I’ve introduced, the 60-day notice period and independent investigation of nominees would give legislators a fuller picture of the individuals they are being asked to confirm to serve in critically important roles, like the Parole Board and other positions. It is just basic due diligence and New Yorkers have a right to expect that it has been exercised during this process.”

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