



NEW YORK STATE SENATOR

Michael Gianaris

## Senate Deputy Leader Gianaris, Senator Hoylman-Sigal To Introduce Legislation Closing Loophole In New York's Ethics Law, Shining Light On Dark Money Groups That Spend To Influence Nominations

MICHAEL GIANARIS January 30, 2023

| ISSUE: **COURT OF APPEALS, COMMISSION ON JUDICIAL NOMINATIONS, CHIEF JUDGE, JUDGE JANET DIFIORE**



ALBANY, N.Y. – Senate Deputy Leader Michael Gianaris will introduce new legislation, to be co-sponsored by Senate Judiciary Chair Brad Hoylman-Sigal, aimed at exposing the influence of dark money in the nomination and confirmation process of state officials. The

bill would require spending to influence nominations to be disclosed to the New York State Commission on Ethics and Lobbying in Government.

“Today’s nominees can be tomorrow’s public officials and it is crucial for the public to know to whom they might be beholden,” said **Senate Deputy Leader Michael Gianaris**. “Our ethics laws must apply to dark money efforts on behalf of or opposed to nominations so that the public can have more confidence in those who serve in their name.”

“Earlier this month, the Judiciary Committee of the New York State Senate held nearly five hours of public hearings to review the qualifications of the Governor’s nominee for the Chief Judge of New York’s highest court,” said **State Senator Brad Hoylman, Chair of the Senate Judiciary Committee**. “However, behind closed doors, dark money from unknown donors was being raised to influence the State Senate’s confirmation process. The public deserves to know who contributed to this campaign and how much money was spent, just as the law requires for political and lobbying campaigns. I look forward to working with Senate Deputy Leader Gianaris to close this ‘confirmation process loophole’ in our state laws soon as possible.”

Currently, ethics laws require disclosures to the state ethics commission when entities are lobbying government officials in favor or against legislation, regulatory decisions, or procurement matters. The new legislation would clarify that advocacy in favor or against nominations also requires disclosure.

**During the recent nomination process** for the next Chief Judge of the New York State Court of Appeals, an entity reportedly spent \$75,000 to \$100,000 to influence the state legislature on the matter, without disclosing the amount or sources of their funding.

Deputy Leader Gianaris expects the legislation, which will be co-sponsored by Senator Hoylman-Sigal, to be introduced later this week.