



NEW YORK STATE SENATOR

Malcolm Smith

State Democrats Strengthen Slaughterhouse Safeguards

MALCOLM A. SMITH June 23, 2008

(Albany, NY)-June 24, 2008-State Senator John Sabini (D-Queens) announced today that legislation he sponsored to strengthen safeguards against unsanitary slaughterhouses in New York state has passed.

The legislation S. 5874-A, which establishes a three-strikes provision for slaughterhouses who routinely fail state inspections, was amended after original passage on June 11th. The amendment also requires licensed slaughterhouses to post a copy of their most recent sanitary inspection.

“For years licensed slaughter houses have been failing inspections and have continued to receive licenses,” said Senator Sabini. “This bill will ensure these slaughterhouses will be held accountable and no longer be able to continue this practice.”

The legislation states that any licensed establishment where animals or fowl are slaughtered or butchered will lose its license after failing three consecutive inspections. Under the legislation the Commissioner of the state Department of Agriculture and Markets will enforce the regulations and suspend the licenses of violators.

The new regulations also requires that slaughterhouses post copies of recent sanitary inspections at each public entrance and make this information available to the public upon request. Failure to comply with the provisions will result in a fine of \$500 for every day in violation.

State Democratic Leader Malcolm A. Smith (D-St.Albans) said: “These are common sense measures that will go a long way to protect New Yorkers. I commend Senator Sabini for his efforts to reign in the few slaughterhouses that would knowingly distribute tainted and contaminated meat while jeopardizing the health of our families.”

“People pay more for freshly killed meat under religious procedures, such as halal and kosher foods. Consumers should get the quality they deserve and pay for. These tougher regulations will guarantee that,” said Sabini.

As the number of state-licensed live poultry markets continues to increase, so too does the need for increased oversight to ensure environmental and public health. This legislation addresses an issue that arises under current law where slaughter facilities may fail a series of inspections and still be allowed by law to operate once the violations are corrected.

State Senator Sabini said the old regulations contributed to a continuous cycle of violators receiving citations, correcting the problem, only to lapse into violation again. This measure would strengthen existing law and encourage market owners to better comply with existing sanitary regulations.