



NEW YORK STATE SENATOR

Malcolm Smith

Statement From Senate Democratic Leader Smith On The Final Day Of Session

MALCOLM A. SMITH June 20, 2007

I'd like to thank the Governor, the Lieutenant Governor, the Senate and the Assembly for a lively engagement of the issues this session. I especially want to congratulate my Conference, particularly the new members, who hit the ground running early and clearly demonstrated their tireless commitment to serving the people of New York State. They have done so with grace, diligence, persistence and determination. I am proud of them.

Nonetheless, I am disappointed with the turn of events as this year's session draws to a close. A number of important issues have yet to be resolved, including Campaign Finance Reform, the Paid Family Leave Act, Article X and Judicial Pay Raises. We were prepared as a Conference to go into extra innings and see these issues through to completion, but unfortunately the Republican Majority has chosen to cut and run on their responsibilities.

I must ask: 'why quit now?' Certainly I understand the need to impose deadlines. However, a deadline is an arbitrary restriction, a mere planning tool. In no way does it excuse us from completing our work -- especially when the consequences of inaction can have a ripple effect on the life and livelihood of all New Yorkers.

It is worth emphasizing that early in the session we made a number of significant strides, mainly because there seemed to be a spirit of bipartisanship leading us to such achievements as Worker's Compensation Reform, Civil Confinement and Anti-Human Trafficking Legislation. These agreements indicated that a new culture had taken root in Albany.

In the end, we did not accomplish everything that we could have. Nevertheless, I remain confident and optimistic that the Governor, the Speaker of the Assembly and the Senate Majority Leader will return later this year with a renewed commitment to complete the people's agenda.
