



NEW YORK STATE SENATOR

Liz Krueger

Krueger Calls on Bruno to Allow Full Senate Debate and Vote on Environmental "Super Bills" Before Session Ends

LIZ KRUEGER June 12, 2007

Environmental Super Bills Have the Support of a Majority of Senators

New York—Citing support from a majority of the members of the State Senate for the environmental Super Bills, State Senator Liz Krueger today urged Republican Majority Leader Joe Bruno to stop blocking these bills from debate, and allow a full vote on the floor of the Senate. The Majority Leader has unilateral control over what legislation comes to the floor, and has allowed these environmental bills to languish in the Environmental Conservation committee -- most for numerous legislative sessions.

The Super Bills are The Community Preservation Act (S.3836), The Wetlands Bill (S.3835), The Bigger, Better Bottle Bill (S.3434), The Climate Change Solutions Act and Fund (S.5347 & S.5371).

"Experts and advocates have made strong, sound, and convincing arguments for why each of these pieces of legislation should be passed; the Assembly has repeatedly supported the Super Bills; and yet, one man, Senator Joe Bruno, is stonewalling efforts to protect our State's environment," Krueger declared. "My office receives countless letters from constituents about these bills, and with just over one week left in this session, we are near the end of our opportunity to debate and vote on these very important environmental bills."

The Super Bills would do the following:

The Community Preservation Act: gives cities and towns the power to voluntarily create a dedicated fund to protect natural areas and historic architecture;

The Wetlands Bill: lowers the threshold for state authority in protecting wetlands from 12.4 acres, to 1 acre;

The Bigger Better Bottle Bill: expands our bottle law and creates new funding for environmental protection;

The Climate Change Solutions Act: seeks to reduce greenhouse emissions and implement more energy-efficient programs, and

The Climate Change Solutions Fund proceeds from the auction of emissions allowances, specifically those associated with the Regional Greenhouse Gas Initiative.

"These Super Bills are the standard by which this session will be judged in regards to the environment. Not passing them, or weakening them to the point where they no longer fully meet their objectives, will reflect very poorly on the Senate and will underscore a real failure of leadership by the Senate majority leader," Krueger said.

Krueger, who has been a leader in the movement to reform legislative rules, which currently concentrate power on the Majority Leader and allow him to block movement on bills of his choosing (including the Super Bills), indicated that she and other Democratic Senators also continue to be denied the opportunity to cosponsor any of these bills.

"I, along with most of my Senate Democratic colleagues, have filed official requests, known as buckslips, to cosponsor each of the Super Bills, but these requests have been ignored. Senator Bruno does this, in part, to weaken the appearance of support for pieces of legislation that he knows should be passed," Krueger explained.

“When passed, the Super Bills will go a long way towards protecting the environment and increasing recycling, preventing litter, making communities safer and cleaner, reducing waste disposal costs for municipalities and tax-payers, and creating new jobs in the recycling and retail industries,” Krueger concluded. “With about a week and a half left in the session, there is no more time for delay. Senator Bruno needs to allow these bills to come to the floor, where they should all pass if the Republicans who have historically signed on as cosponsors simply vote for their own bills.”