



NEW YORK STATE SENATOR

Suzi Oppenheimer

Senate Passes Groundbreaking Legislation Modernizing New York Court System

SUZI OPPENHEIMER August 12, 2009

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New Yorkers will now have an easier time accessing and filing court papers online thanks to legislation passed by the New York State Senate. The bill, S. 6003 (Schneiderman), which was strongly supported by Senator Suzi Oppenheimer (D-Mamaroneck), takes full advantage of new technologies to create a fairer, more efficient, and cost effective judicial system.

Under a pilot program started ten years ago, New York allowed the electronic filing (e-filing) of court papers in a small number of cases and in a limited number of courts. By May 2009, 360,000 documents and 160,000 cases had been filed through the New York Electronic Filing System. The Senate's action today expands e-filing statewide in civil courts and commercial cases.

"By allowing court papers to be viewed and filed online," observed Senator Oppenheimer, New Yorkers will no longer have to spend valuable time and money going to the court house to submit documents or look them up. E-Filing promotes broader public access to court records, while preserving privacy, and lowers the cost of litigation."

The bill allows the state's Chief Administrative Judge to permit e-filing statewide in the Supreme Court, Surrogate's Court and the Court of Claims. E-filing would remain voluntary so that individuals who lack access to the Internet would not be barred from participating in the judicial process. A companion bill, A. 8056-A (Weinstein) passed the Assembly earlier this year.

"E-filing is a common sense, user friendly approach to court filings. I urge the Governor to sign this bill into law," concluded Senator Oppenheimer.