



NEW YORK STATE SENATOR

Jose M. Serrano

Joint Advisory Board of State Government Proceedings Concludes Public Meetings

JOSÉ M. SERRANO December 21, 2009

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(Albany, NY)- The New York State Legislature Joint Advisory Board on the Broadcast of State Government Proceedings (the “Joint Advisory Board”) has concluded an initial round of public meetings on the current legislative channel and the expansion of its programming.

In conducting these meetings, the Joint Advisory Board, Co-Chaired by Senator José M. Serrano (D- Manhattan/Bronx) and Assembly Majority Leader Ron Canestrari D-Cohoes), received important insight from a nationally recognized expert on how the governmental affairs channel should operate. In addition the Joint Advisory Board accepted written and live testimony from interested members of the public.

“Having worked to establish a bi-partisan board, it is our goal to guarantee that this channel provide New Yorkers with a deep and unfiltered look into the works of their legislature through a non-partisan operating structure,” said Senator Serrano. “Although I am aware that this is only one step on the road to establishing an open and transparent government in Albany, I am certain that it is one of the most important components in reaching that goal.”

“I was thrilled to have had the opportunity to hear the concerns of the public on this matter,

and I hope that we continue to be inclusive of the community as we move forward with our efforts to reform state government.”

Assembly Majority Leader Canestrari said, “I am very encouraged by the progress our joint advisory board has made in the four months since its creation. The immediate coverage of all legislative hearings on our legislative channel will significantly enhance New Yorkers’ access to their state government”.

“Through the efforts of the board, we are on the verge of realizing our principal goal of a true state “C-Span,” he said.

On December 10, the Joint Advisory Board members received a presentation from Paul Giguere, President of the Connecticut Network and Executive Director of NAPAN (National Association of Public Affairs Networks), who provided testimony on the Best Practices model for the establishment of a state level public affairs channel established by NAPAN.

The board also heard live testimony from Good Government groups, including Citizen’s Union and the Open Government Foundation, as well as testimony from members of the public. The board members also reviewed written testimony which will be included in the public record on this matter.

The channel will begin expanded broadcast of all legislative hearings in January.

Staff from the Legislature and the cable industry are currently holding meetings to determine the technical and other logistical matters involved with in the expansion of the current programming and the establishment of an independent channel.

Having completed these initial steps, the Advisory Board is now soliciting a comprehensive proposal from New York's Cable Television operators on the transformation of the existing limited channel into an independent structure building upon the C-Span model.

Other Joint Advisory Board members include Senators John Bonacic (R- Mt. Hope), Andrea Stewart-Cousins (D- Yonkers), David J. Valesky (D- Oneida), Assemblymembers Margaret M. Markey (D-Maspeth), Darryl C. Town (D- Brooklyn), and Jane R. Corwin (R-Clarence).

The board, which recently released its initial report, was created to make recommendations for expanding current programming on the Legislative Television channel and to create a statewide public affairs channel modeled after C-SPAN.