



NEW YORK STATE SENATOR

Frank Padavan

Padavan Signs "Pledge For Change New York"

FRANK PADAVAN April 27, 2010

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New York State Senator Frank Padavan (Queens) announced today that he has signed the “Pledge for Change New York” which is calling upon elected officials in New York state to enact reforms to state ethics laws, budgetary process and institute new measures aimed at increasing accountability and transparency.

“Changing the way government operates on all levels, from the legislature to the executive branch is a top priority that I have long fought for,” Padavan said. “Enacting common sense and fair-minded reforms are a must before we conclude this legislative session. The provisions and proposals contained in the ‘Pledge for Change New York’ are sensible and will put New York back on the right track in restoring confidence and breaking the culture of dysfunction in the New York State Legislature. I proudly sign this pledge and look forward to what I hope will be a massive bipartisan step toward reforming New York’s government.”

The collaborative project of good government groups includes the Brennan Center for Justice, Citizens Union of the City of New York, Common Cause/NY, the League of Women Voters/NYS and the New York State Public Research Group (NYPIRG).

Some of the proposals lined out in the pledge include:

- Ensuring ethics, lobbying and campaign finance watchdogs are independent and powerful;
- Ending the process of legislators drawing their own district lines during the redistricting process;
- Providing fairness in allocating legislative resources and “member items” and amend the legislature’s rules to create a more open and accountable body;
- Closing obsolete public authorities with the creation of a “base-closing like commission”
- Establishing an independent fiscal watch-dog, along the lines of the Congressional Budget Office; and
- Ending “pay to play” for lobbyist and seekers- and receivers- of government contracts by dramatically lowering contributions limits for such donors

Earlier this year, Senator Padavan presented his “Blueprint for a Stronger New York” plan which included proposals endorsed in the “Pledge for Change New York.” Padavan’s “Blueprint” plan also includes his legislation that will establish reasonable financial and business disclosure requirements for campaign consultants who also engage in lobbying state governmental entities including the State Legislature. The legislation is modeled after current practices in the City of New York and the State of Texas. This legislation would fundamentally help break both practices of “pay to play” and “influence peddling” that tend to arise when the realms of politics, lobbying and the legislative process intersect.

Other provisions in Padavan’s “Blueprint” include: empowering voters through Initiative and Referendum, the creation of an Independent Budget Office and instituting fiscally responsible measures with the establishment of a four percent constitutional spending cap.

“The ‘Pledge for Change New York’ provides a solid framework which we should build upon,” Padavan said. “There is much more we can do to eliminate pay-to-pay, influence peddling and bring about sound and responsible fiscal and governmental reform to New York. With New York at the crossroads, we must build a stronger foundation – a foundation of real

reform- that tackles our challenges head on and instills accountability and transparency to the workings of New York's government."

Attached is Senator Padavan's signed copy of the "Pledge for Change New York"