



NEW YORK STATE SENATOR

Betty Little

Little: Senate Approves Temporary Liquor License Bill

BETTY LITTLE April 28, 2010

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The State Senate today approved legislation cosponsored by Senator Betty Little that would create a temporary liquor retail permit system to address the sometimes lengthy and costly process of obtaining a liquor license.

“Some of the most frustrated people I have spoken with are those who have poured their life’s savings and untold hours of work into opening a restaurant only to see months and months go by waiting for their liquor license to be approved,” said Senator Little.

“Delays mean lost revenue. For new businesses starting out, a lengthy delay can mean the end of a dream. Especially in a tourism-dependent area like ours, getting a license to sell alcohol after the tourists have left for the season does no good.

“Under new leadership at the Liquor Authority, the situation has improved immensely. However, we can’t predict what will happen there in the future and we need a law that serves to protect small businesses against bureaucratic nightmares and excessive delays.”

Little’s bill, S.6231C, includes several requirements for those seeking a new permit or transferring a permit. The temporary permit would be valid for 90 days with the possibility of an extension, if needed. A temporary permit would allow a business to sell to customers

and could not be used for resale. The bill would apply only to premises located in municipalities of less than one million people and the temporary permit could be revoked at any time if the authority deemed doing so necessary.

Little had begun work on the bill last fall along with Democratic cosponsors Senators Craig Johnson and David Valesky. In October 2009, the New York State Law Revision Commission released a report on the State Liquor Authority (SLA) which provided a detailed analysis of problems the authority had in administering the Alcohol and Beverage Control Law, including the issuance of liquor licenses.

The Senate approved the bill by a vote of 58 to 3. A companion bill is sponsored by Assemblyman Robin Schimminger, chair of the Assembly Economic Development Committee.