



NEW YORK STATE SENATOR

Jeffrey D. Klein

Senator Klein Fights to Save Community Gardens

JEFFREY D. KLEIN May 27, 2010

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Senate Passes Klein Bill to Support Local Gardens, Helping New Yorkers Maintain Access to Fresh Fruits and Vegetables

ALBANY, NY – Deputy Majority Leader State Senator Jeff Klein (D-Bronx/Westchester) announced Thursday that the NYS State Senate passed his bill to provide continued support for local community gardens. Senator Klein's bill helps support the efforts of many New Yorkers to use these gardens to grow low-cost, fresh fruits and vegetables, and build stronger community and neighborhood bonds.

Specifically, Klein's bill (S.6343/NYS Assembly same-as A.6442-A/Cook) requires municipalities that sell, transfer, or lease land from a community garden for a different purpose to use a small portion (10%) of the sale price to purchase or create a new garden, sustain another existing garden, or support local groups that maintain these gardens.

“Small, locally maintained gardens provide more than just fresh food – they promote physical exercise and help New Yorkers to build a vital sense of community. Especially in today’s tough fiscal times, we must ensure that these gardens do not get unnecessarily thrown on the chopping block. I urge the Assembly and the Governor to join me in supporting community gardens, and helping to provide much needed open space, recreation, and food production to countless New Yorkers,” said Deputy Majority Leader State Senator Jeffrey D. Klein (D-Bronx/Westchester).

Particularly in New York City, most community gardens are located in communities where residents do not have yards or other space where they could tend a plot of land. These gardens are often the only "park" on the street. Additionally, many of these gardens were created through sweat equity by neighborhood residents who volunteered to clear abandoned lots and create and maintain green space for use by seniors, children, school groups, and summer camps. Many of the gardens have received honors and some have received national press attention.

Senator Klein’s bill has the support of the Capital District Association of Community Gardens, and the New York State Open Space Institute.