



NEW YORK STATE SENATOR

Pedro Espada Jr.

## Senate Passes Domestic Workers Bill of Rights - Now On To Farmworkers!

PEDRO ESPADA, JR. June 1, 2010

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**Espada Says Legislation Protecting Domestic Workers Was Long Overdue; After Senate Passes Bill, He Uses Opportunity to Renew Call for Long Overdue Legislative Protections for Another Work Force – Farm Workers**

Now that the Senate passed legislation tonight by a 33-28 margin that provides long-awaited protections for domestic workers, Majority Leader Pedro Espada, Jr. said he would use this historic vote to get his colleagues to refocus their attention on helping another workforce whose rights have been long neglected – farm workers.

Espada, a sponsor of the Domestic Workers Bill of Rights (S2311D), praised his colleagues for passing legislation that guarantees domestic workers protections from discrimination and notice of termination, ensures paid sick days and holidays, and provides other basic labor protections.

“Housekeepers, nannies, elderly caregivers and other domestic workers employed in private homes will no longer be denied their rights. This legislation provides standards for an industry whose members’ rights have gone unprotected and unrecognized for far too long. It’s an end to the exploitation and degradation that domestic workers have been forced to endure for many years. They will now be protected from employer abuse and mistreatment,” Sen. Espada said.

“They never asked for special treatment, only for fair and equitable standards, basic protections and benefits enjoyed by every other worker in the state,” said Sen. Espada, who added, “every other worker, that is, with the exception of farm workers.”

Sen. Espada has been pushing for legislation that would provide labor protections to tens of thousands of farm workers across the state – the vast majority immigrants of Hispanic origin – ever since meeting with workers after an unannounced visit to an upstate duck farm, where he learned of both labor and physical abuses.

“Working without a safety net – as domestic workers have been doing prior to the Senate passing legislation tonight – female farm workers face alleged sexual abuse and other horrors, and all farm workers face violence and harassment in the work environment. Most are forced to work weeks at a time without a day off. They don’t get paid for sick time and vacations are unheard of,” Sen. Espada explained.

“Now that we have secured protections for domestic workers, we have to secure the same protections for farm workers that will eliminate the atrocities that they are forced to endure on a daily basis. No one should have to be afraid to go to work or worry if they are going to make it home in one piece. This is no way to live and work,” Sen. Espada said. #