



NEW YORK STATE SENATOR

James L. Seward

Seward Named "Hero of Reform"

JAMES L. SEWARD August 17, 2010

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ONEONTA, 08/16/10 – State Senator James L. Seward (R/C/I-Oneonta) today announced that he has pledged his support to the “New York Uprising” reform agenda and has been named a Hero of Reform by the grassroots effort.

“I have fought for a number of key reforms during my time in the state senate,” said Senator Seward. **“With my support, legislation has been approved to open up the state budget process, create a more transparent senate and clean up Albany. Unfortunately, over the last two years, one party rule has dominated state government and many of the landmark reforms have been ignored.”**

Here is what Senator Seward has done to address important reform issues and what he is committed to doing going forward.

Budget Reform – With Senator Seward’s support, the senate has passed legislation to adopt Generally Accepted Accounting Principles (GAAP); to institute a five-year financial plan; use performance budgeting and create an independent budget office. The bills were not passed by the assembly.

In addition to these, Seward has supported other budget reform measures to address the problems of over-spending and over-taxation that are cited as major concerns by NY Uprising.

Seward also voted to enact the state Budget Reform Law of 2007 which requires the use of joint, public budget conference committees to ensure total budget transparency, and sets a schedule in law to achieve a responsible, on-time, balanced budget.

“Unfortunately, senate Democrats have thumbed their noses at the Budget Reform Law over the past two years and have conducted the most secretive budget negotiations in state history, resulting in disastrous budgets that raised spending and taxes by billions of dollars.”

Seward has also consistently opposed tax increases and supported the enactment of a constitutional state spending cap to stop out-of-control spending and the tax increases that pay for that spending, make our state less economically competitive and drive jobs out of state.

Ethics Reform - Earlier this year, Democrats in the legislature put forward an ethics reform bill that was criticized by virtually every newspaper in the state, as well as some good

government groups, because it was too weak. While I voted for this bill as a small first step, I also joined my Republican colleagues in proposing and supporting three amendments to strengthen the bill. Senate Democrats defeated every amendment. The bill was vetoed by Governor Paterson because it did not go far enough.

“Rather than use the governor’s veto of an ethics reform bill as an opportunity to publicly negotiate a better, stronger measure, legislative Democrats tried to ram through an override so the weaker bill they settled for would be enacted into law. I refused to vote for this override because I believe we need to negotiate a stronger bill that ensures more disclosure and more transparency. The people deserve better.”

Independent Redistricting – Senator Seward supports legislation (S.6240) that would create an independent commission to draw new district lines for the legislature and Congress.

The bill provides for one appointment each by the majority and minority conference leaders, ensuring a truly bi-partisan redistricting process.

“We need to restore public confidence in state government. Following the already established reform laws and creating additional transparencies will foster public trust and create a more responsive legislature. The New York Uprising pledge embraces the principles I have already been fighting for and will continue to support moving forward,” Seward concluded.

New York Uprising, founded by former NYC Mayor Ed Koch, is a non-partisan coalition dedicated to reforming New York’s dysfunctional state government. It is led by Mayor Koch along with a board of trustees that includes former NYC Mayor Rudy Giuliani, former NYS Governor Mario Cuomo former NYS Comptroller Ned Regan, former US Congressman Herman Badillo, former Ambassador Felix Rohatyn, former Deputy Mayor Alair Townsend, former Deputy Mayor Rudy Washington, former Deputy Mayor Peter J. Solomon and former Deputy Mayor John Zuccotti.

For more information about New York Uprising visit their website,

<http://www.nyuprising.org>