



NEW YORK STATE SENATOR

Thomas F. O'Mara

## Senate gavels in new session with committee assignments, Senator O'Mara assigned key posts

THOMAS F. O'MARA January 11, 2011

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**Albany, N.Y., January 11**—State Senator Tom O'Mara (R-C, Big Flats) has been named chairman of the Senate Elections Committee by Senate Majority Leader Dean G. Skelos (R-Long Island).

In addition to his committee chairmanship O'Mara, beginning his first term representing New York's 53<sup>rd</sup> Senate District, was also appointed to serve as a member on 10 other Senate committees.

"It's a full and enormously challenging plate of assignments, so I'm grateful for the leadership's confidence in my experience and ability to hopefully provide some worthwhile input that moves us forward in positive directions and produces results. I'll do my best," said O'Mara, who prior to his Senate election last fall served as a three-term state assemblyman. "I'm especially excited by these opportunities to get to work on committees that directly impact so many of the key challenges facing our region, from the future of farming to upstate job creation. These first-term assignments offer the chance for direct input on a range of issues vital to the short- and long-term future of our regional economy, and the overall quality and strength of our communities."

[see attached copy of news release below]

The Senate Committee on Elections serves as the Senate's primary legislative and governmental oversight committee on New York's election policies and voting processes. Among other responsibilities, the committee is charged with developing and reviewing proposed reforms, increasing public awareness of New York's voting procedures, and overseeing the practices and policies of the state Board of Elections.

Skelos highlighted the importance of the committee's work.

"New York just conducted its first elections using new voting machines and technology and there is more work to be done to review this new system to ensure that people are properly trained, that voters understand how it works, and that the technology works properly so people can be confident that elections are conducted in a fair manner," Skelos said. "I'm confident that Senator Tom O'Mara will do an excellent job as Chair of the Senate Elections Committee as it tackles these challenges that are fundamental to our democracy."

O'Mara said, "One of government's fundamental responsibilities is to ensure the accessibility, integrity, and quality of the electoral process. I look forward to this opportunity to ensure that the Senate remains careful and deliberate in its approach to reforming, improving, and overseeing voting in New York State," O'Mara said.

In addition to his chairmanship of the Elections Committee, O'Mara will serve as a member on the following 10 Senate committees: Agriculture; Banks; Civil Service and Pensions; Codes; Cultural Affairs and Tourism; Education; Energy; Environmental Conservation; Ethics; and Judiciary.

O'Mara stressed that his committee assignments will allow him to focus many of the key issues facing the Southern Tier and Finger Lakes regions, including strengthening industries like agriculture and tourism, environmental protection, public safety and criminal justice, and education.

The 53<sup>rd</sup> Senate District is comprised of Chemung, Schuyler, Steuben, and Yates counties, and a part of Tompkins County (the city and town of Ithaca, and the towns of Enfield, Newfield, and Ulysses).