



NEW YORK STATE SENATOR

Mark Grisanti

Grisanti Supports Legislation to Protect Constituents

MARK GRISANTI January 19, 2011

New York State Senator Mark Grisanti (60th District) and New York State Assemblyman John Ceretto (138th District) today voiced their support of the introduction of legislation by New York State Assemblyman Philip Boyle (8th District) that calls for the creation of a bill that would make it a misdemeanor for any elected official who destroys public documents.

At a press conference held this morning in Albany, Boyle shared details of his proposal in a bipartisan announcement of legislation that would make it a crime, punishable by up to one year in jail and a \$25,000 fine, for any elected official to knowingly destroy "open" constituent case files.

Both Grisanti and Ceretto discovered their immediate predecessors have destroyed existing constituent case files. Often times these actions are taken for no other reason than to spite their successor.

As Grisanti points out, the real victims of such actions are the constituents.

"Documentation that was accumulated over a period of time that could be used to help resolve constituent matters needs to be easily accessible," said Sen. Grisanti. "When a file is destroyed, the constituent is left with the sinking realization that precious time and effort

have been wasted. It is something that should not happen and we must do what we can to try and ensure that it doesn't occur in the future.

In addition, Ceretto was unable to access 12 years of files from his predecessor.

"It is unfortunate that it now has become necessary for us to legislate transition decorum to ensure that constituents are not the victims of political spite," Assemblyman Ceretto said. "I look forward to working in a bi-partisan manner to pass this legislation to make certain that freshmen legislators, Republican and Democrat, have a smoother transition than was afforded me."

One senator who did not experience this problem was Senator Patrick Gallivan (Republican - 59th District), who points out how his transition into office was not as complicated as Grisanti and Ceretto's were.

"Senator Volker provided invaluable assistance to my staff and I, ensuring that the residents of the 59th Senate District experienced no lapse in effective representation," said Sen. Gallivan. "The outgoing senator provided my office with up-to-date constituent case files, informational briefs and office management advice which has allowed me to provide the type of service my constituents expect and deserve. I thank him for that."

The issue is something that both Republican and Democratic members of the State Legislature have discussed as a bipartisan approach towards ending this destructive practice that only hurts constituents.