



NEW YORK STATE SENATOR

David J. Valesky

Senator David Valesky Joins Groundbreaking Independent Democratic Conference

DAVID J. VALESKY January 20, 2011



State Senator David J. Valesky (D-Oneida) announced his departure from the Senate Democratic Conference and the formation of a third legislative conference, along with three of his Democratic colleagues, Senators Jeffrey D. Klein, Diane Savino, and David Carlucci. The four senators will caucus together as the Independent Democratic Conference (IDC). As a group, they will push for commonsense solutions to the problems facing this state, break the hyper-partisan gridlock that has gripped the Senate, and work to restore the public's trust in its public officials.

A month ago, Senator Valesky abstained from voting for Senator John Sampson to lead the Senate Democrats in an internal conference vote.

"The voters of the 49th district told me that they were sick of business as usual in Albany. To me, the way that vote was conducted exemplified business as usual, and I abstained because I wanted to let my colleagues know this was not acceptable to me, or to the people I represent," Senator Valesky said.

When Senator Valesky learned that the Senate Democratic conference overspent its budget by more than ten million dollars in the midst of a fiscal crisis, he and like-minded senators realized that drastic change was necessary, and decided to break away from the conference and form the IDC.

"I made this decision with the people of my district in the forefront of my mind," Senator Valesky said. "They are rightly sick and tired of the status quo in Albany, and have lost faith in their state government. We know that the ways of the past don't work, and if we want to restore the faith of the people, we have to try something new."

The IDC creates a new paradigm in the State Senate, which for the first time will have more than two legislative conferences. There will be no concentration of power in the Independent Democratic Conference. Each member will have an equal say and an equal vote when it caucuses.

The IDC has pledged to work with Governor Cuomo, the incoming Senate Majority and Minority, and its other partners in government to get New York's fiscal house in order, foster job creation, and cap property taxes. They will also be pursuing a legislative agenda that includes Senator Valesky's independent redistricting legislation, enacting tough new ethics reforms and increasing government transparency.

"This conference represents a new way of conducting the people's business—with civility, a commitment to sound policy, and a willingness to work together," Senator Valesky said. "In time, this may become a new model for legislative governance; but for now, it is the only choice that makes sense."