



NEW YORK STATE SENATOR

James L. Seward

## Senator Seward Named Chairman of Senate Insurance Committee

JAMES L. SEWARD January 10, 2011

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ALBANY, 01/11/11 – State Senator James L. Seward (R/C/I–Oneonta) is set to fight for vital insurance needs in the new senate session after being named chairman of the senate insurance committee.

**“Finding quality, affordable health insurance is a constant struggle for families and businesses. As chairman of the senate insurance committee, I will help guide state policy and ensure more people have proper coverage,”** Seward said. **“Fighting fraud that drives up insurance costs for everyone, including the state, will also be a priority.”**

Seward previously served as senate insurance committee chairman from 1999 through 2008.

Seward has fought to broaden health insurance coverage and reform, and the writing of auto and property/casualty policies in a free, but fair, market that is sensitive to consumers' needs. He has pushed wider availability of health insurance for the uninsured and to reduce pressure on health insurance costs for workers and small business owners. He won passage of legislation in 2002 that extends group health insurance offered by chambers of commerce to sole proprietors of businesses, and in 2008 secured legislative approval of a bill to provide short term health insurance policies to young adults and college students. He sponsored the "Health Insurance Premium Integrity Act" to boost the percentage of premium dollars spent

directly on health care, and was responsible for broadening health insurance coverage for voluntary firefighters and EMTs by letting them purchase policies through their municipalities.

Seward won statewide recognition for his "Freedom Plan" to match simpler, lower cost health insurance policies with federally authorized health savings accounts. The legislation is considered an innovative approach to addressing the rising cost of health insurance for employers and their employees. Seward has led the fight in New York against auto insurance fraud, a significant factor in rising auto insurance premiums