



NEW YORK STATE SENATOR

Jack M. Martins

## Senator Martins Welcomes Students to Annual Somos Conference

JACK M. MARTINS April 4, 2011

| ISSUE: **CONTINUING EDUCATION**



Senator Jack M. Martins attended and opened the New York State Session for the annual Somos El Futuro conference. Martins joined with Senator Gustavo Rivera, Senator Jose Peralta, Assemblyman Marcos Crespo, Assemblywoman Vanessa Gibson for the session.

SUNY and CUNY students had the opportunity to get a first-hand look at the historic seat of New York State government as they conduct their own mock session on Saturday afternoon. Video of the mock session will be posted to the NYSenate YouTube account for

viewing online.

On Saturday, April 2, Senator Martins and Senator Peralta (D-Queens) welcomed the participants to the Somos Conference.

The Somos Conference is the largest gathering of Puerto Rican and Hispanic civil and political leaders in the state and is instrumental in advocating for the development and advancement of legislative action that impacts the Hispanic community in a positive way. Highlighted by lectures, workshops and other educational tools, the aim of the conference is to create opportunities for Hispanic New Yorkers by engaging them in the public policy process.

This year's theme is "Está en Nuestras Manos: Achieving Hispanic Empowerment." The conference ran from Friday, April 1 through Sunday, April 3.

Approximately 70 students participated. Senator Martins, the son of Portuguese immigrants, became the first Republican to visit the conference in the 15 years it has taken place.

"It was an honor to be a part of Somos El Futuro and to share this very special day with our next generation of leaders," said Senator Martins.

Students who attended the conference at the State Capitol debated specific pieces of legislation in the New York State Senate chamber as part of the conference weekend.