



NEW YORK STATE SENATOR

Adriano Espaillat

Sen. Espaillat Celebrates Signing of Sweeping Ethics Reform Law

ADRIANO ESPAILLAT August 17, 2011

| ISSUE: **ETHICS, CAMPAIGN FINANCE**

Legislation will help clean up Albany and hold elected officials accountable

After strong support from Senator Adriano Espaillat (D – Manhattan/Bronx) who helped pass a major ethics reform bill in the Senate, Governor Cuomo has signed the new law. The ethics reforms are a great step forward in addressing Albany’s problems, as they shed light on the legislative process and will help bring integrity, accountability, transparency, and public confidence back to state government.

A first-year member of the Senate, Senator Espaillat had pledged to pass strong ethics reform as quickly as possible. “New Yorkers sent us to Albany to fix the dysfunction and corruption that made our state a punch-line of jokes around the country,” said Senator Espaillat. “By enacting sweeping ethics reform and restoring the public’s confidence in our state government, we made good on our promise.”

The ethics reform law – known formally as the “Public Integrity Act of 2011” – will have several important components that will increase transparency and take on unethical practices in government. These measures will:

- Require comprehensive disclosure from state officials – including lawyers – regarding the outside clients & customers they provide services to;
- Eliminate “pay-to-play”;
- Strip public officials convicted of felonies involving public corruption of their taxpayer funded pension;
- Require a more detailed disclosure of outside sources of income;
- Establish Project Sunlight, a database of all individuals and firms with matters before the state;
- Require disclosure from lobbyist and their clients of their relationships with public officials;
- Increase oversight of lobbying activities (by amending critical language in existing law).

The Reform Act also establishes a new Joint Commission on Public Ethics (JCOPE), which will have investigative oversight over both the executive and legislative branches. Creating an independent oversight commission with greater enforcement authority will improve the standards of conduct and accountability for all elected officials.

Senator Espaillat said: “While the ethics reform law we’ve passed is a great step forward, there is plenty of work that must be done to give New Yorkers the best government possible. I urge my colleagues and the governor to join me in supporting independent redistricting, so we can take away politicians’ ability to draw their own districts, and campaign finance reform, so we can reduce the influence of money and special interest groups.”