



NEW YORK STATE SENATOR

Jeffrey D. Klein

Independent Democratic Conference Unveils ThoughtRaiser Initiative

JEFFREY D. KLEIN September 12, 2011

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The Independent Democratic Conference today announced the launch of its “ThoughtRaiser Initiative,” the IDC's effort to have the issues dominating Albany mirror what's most important to New York State residents.

These Thoughtraiser will focus on residents, community stakeholders, and local groups, and will be held across New York state. Each forum will be small by design in order to foster real discussion on how government can best help.

“We want to bridge the divide between what's being discussed in the halls of the State Capitol and what people are talking about around their kitchen table,” said Senator Jeffrey D. Klein, (D-Bronx/ Westchester). “The IDC's ThoughtRaiser Initiative will help accomplish that goal, as well as restore faith in our state government.”

Ideas from these gatherings-big, or small- will be the basis of IDC legislation, Senate hearings, and policy recommendations during the upcoming session.

The ThoughtRaiser Initiative will kick off **10:30 a.m., Wednesday** with simultaneous ThoughtRaisers focused on improving New York's small business climate.

“It is imperative that we work hand in hand with small business owners to hear directly from them what legislation we can work on at the state level to best meet their needs,” Senator David Carlucci (D-Rockland/Orange) said. “It is through innovative processes such as this ThoughtRaiser Initiative that we can create a friendlier business environment for the small businesses that are the backbone of our economy.”

These ThoughtRaisers will be:

Hosted by Senator Klein

Havana Café,

3151 East Tremont Ave.

Bronx, NY

Hosted by Senator Carlucci

The Haverstraw Community Center

50 West Broad Street

Haverstraw, NY

Hosted by Senator Diane Savino, (D-Staten Island/ Brooklyn)

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138 Fingerboard Road

Staten Island, NY

Hosted by Senator David J. Valesky, (D-Oneida)

Syracuse Tech Garden

235 Harrison St.

Syracuse, NY

“These small businesses, these mom and pop stores, are a critically important part of New York's economy. If we want to help our economy, we must help them,” Senator Savino said. “Our Thoughtraiser Initiative is an important step that will open this dialog and put New York back on the right track.”

From 1998 through 2008, New York’s job growth rate was 4.6 percent – just one fifth of the national average. Only one state, Rhode Island, had a lower rate of growth. More importantly, three regions in New York, all upstate, had a negative job growth rate during this time. This past October, New York received the dubious distinction of having the least hospitable tax climate in the nation.

With New York losing population and jobs at a rate greater than the national average, we must find ways to change its climate and reverse this trend.

"Small businesses represent a large part of the New York State economy,” said Senator Valesky. “The goal of this ThoughtRaiser is to hear directly from them the challenges they face, and to find ways to help."

Other ThoughtRaisers topics will soon be announced.

Updates on the ThoughtRaiser Initiative, will be made on the IDC's Facebook page and Twitter Feed, (@IndeDemNYSenate). If you have an idea about how to make New York State work for you, email NYSThoughtRaisers@nysenate.gov.