



NEW YORK STATE SENATOR

Timothy M. Kennedy

## Senator Kennedy Hosts 'Senior Symposium', Unveils Legislative Plan to Protect Western New York Seniors

TIMOTHY M. KENNEDY September 28, 2011

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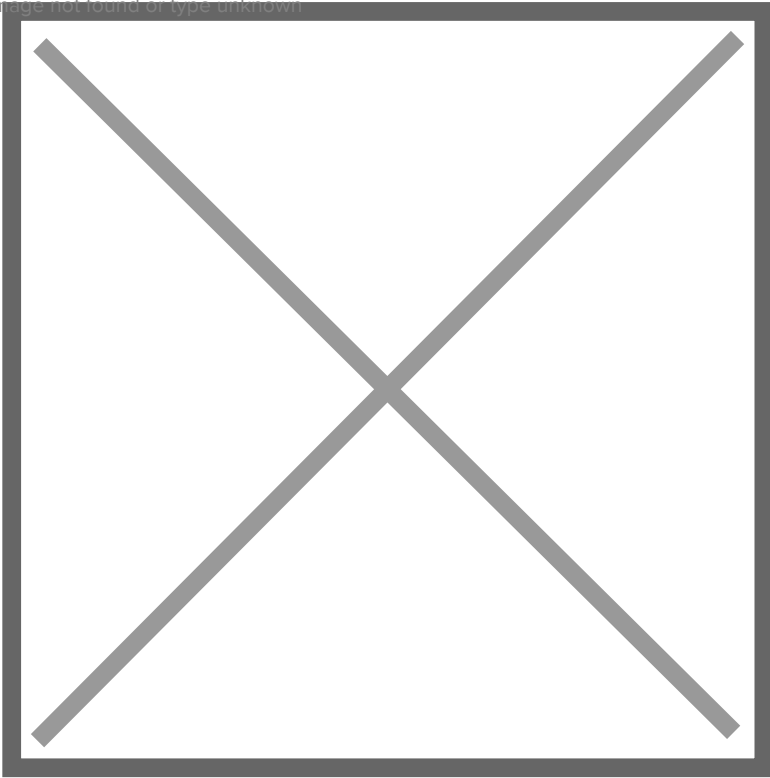
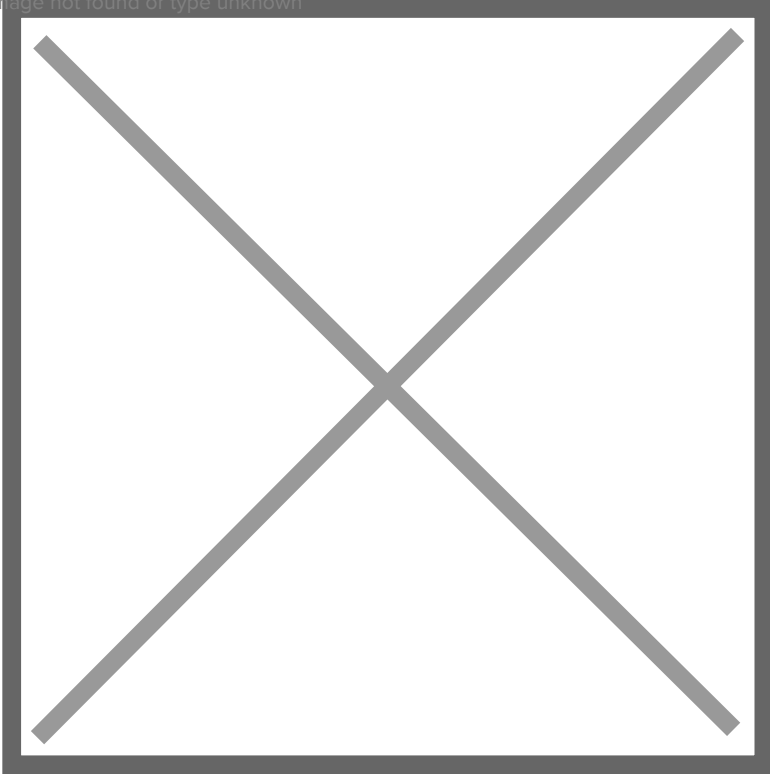


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*About 500 Senior Citizens join Senator Kennedy to gain access to various services, agencies.*

BUFFALO, N.Y. – Senator Timothy M. Kennedy, D-58th District, hosted a “Senior Symposium” Wednesday at Lucarelli’s Banquet Center in Lackawanna.

With the assistance of various agencies and organizations, Senator Kennedy helped connect local Senior Citizens with services available to them and addressed any questions or concerns they may have had. About 500 Senior Citizens from throughout Western New York attended the Symposium.

“Western New York’s Seniors have worked hard to keep our nation and our state strong,” Senator Kennedy said. “As part of our ongoing efforts to improve Seniors’ quality of life, the Senior Symposium was an opportunity for us to ensure Senior Citizens are aware of and are able to access the services that they have earned and deserve. So many have sacrificed so much to make Western New York a great place to live, work and raise a family. I wanted to give a little bit back – that was the motivation behind the Senior Symposium.”

Senator Kennedy also unveiled his legislative plan to protect Western New York Seniors at the Symposium.

“Senior Citizens are important members of our community, and it is critical that we work hard to help them live healthy, safe and independent lives. My plan to protect Western New York Seniors aims to do exactly that,” Senator Kennedy said. “Senior Citizens can count on me to fight for their safety, to work hard to save them money and to protect important services.”

Following Senator Kennedy’s presentation of his plan to protect Western New York Seniors, over 30 agencies and organizations were available for seniors to gain access to various

services. Some of the free services that were available at the Symposium included blood pressure checks, flu shots, health screenings, fraud prevention, computer assistance and more.

“The Senior Symposium was an exciting opportunity for us to hear directly from Western New Yorkers about the issues they’re facing around the community. I look forward to holding the Symposium again next year,” Senator Kennedy said. “We will continue to be available and accessible to our constituents throughout the year utilizing various outreach initiatives, such as our mobile ‘Senator on Your Street’ program.

**Senator Kennedy’s Plan to Protect Western New York Seniors includes:**

• **Fighting for Seniors’ safety:**

- Enact tougher laws against elder abuse: Sponsoring S.4725 to help law enforcement combat the financial exploitation of Seniors.
- Track, investigate and crackdown on elder abuse: Co-sponsoring S.1040 to require the state to collect elder abuse data, track reports and investigate findings.
- Raise awareness and improve understanding of elder abuse: Introducing new bill to require elder abuse training for health practitioners.
- Lock out criminal caregivers: Co-sponsoring S.3531 to empower families with criminal background information of caregivers they’re considering hiring.

• **Working hard to save Seniors money:**

- Help seniors afford to stay in their homes.
  - Make more seniors eligible for real property tax exemptions: Co-sponsoring S.2212 to expand income requirements for partial real property tax exemptions.
  - Streamline the process and remove the burden on seniors of annually renewing their real property tax exemptions: Co-sponsoring S.1924 to automatically renew Seniors' property tax exemption applications.
- Improve the affordability and accessibility of prescription drugs.
  - Restore additional funding to the Elderly Pharmaceutical Insurance Coverage (EPIC) program.
  - Fight against changes to the EPIC program that result in significantly higher drug costs for seniors.

- **Protect important services:**

- Streamline access and empower families to make informed long-term care choices.
  - Protect programs, like NY Connects, that help ensure the health and safety of seniors.
- Keep seniors engaged in our community's growth.
  - Protect programs, such as Retired and Senior Volunteer Programs and the Foster Grandparent Program, that empower seniors to continue to make a difference in our community every day.

