



NEW YORK STATE SENATOR

Stephen M. Saland

## Senator Saland's Legislation to Increase Public Access to Records Related to Public Meetings Becomes Law

STEPHEN M. SALAND January 4, 2012

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Senator Steve Saland (R, I, C - Poughkeepsie) today announced that his legislation which amends the Public Officers Law to require that certain records, which are the subject of a discussion conducted at an open meeting, be made available to the public (S.3255B) has been signed into law by Governor Andrew Cuomo.

The new law requires that records be made available to the public prior to the meeting or at the meeting, to the extent practicable, and posted on the public entity's website prior to the meeting.

Making certain records available on the government's website, or in hard copy at or prior to the meeting, greatly reduces the likelihood of Freedom of Information Law (FOIL) requests for the records after the meeting is held. Additionally, this legislation does not require any public entity to expend funds to post information, and will serve to eliminate the majority of administrative tasks necessary to process a FOIL request.

"Public discussion is an essential part of ensuring transparency in government decision-making processes," stated Senator Saland. "This legislation will greatly expand transparency

by providing easy access to information regarding open meetings on issues of interest to the public, thereby encouraging more public participation. Most importantly, New Yorkers will be better able to comment on important issues addressed by public officials while decisions are being made, rather than after the fact.”