



NEW YORK STATE SENATOR

Daniel L. Squadron

## Squadron Calls on Pols to Disclose Whether Alec Writes Their Bills

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**As GOP Convenes in Tampa, Squadron Petition Urges State Legislators and Candidates to Take Pledge to Disclose Involvement of ALEC**

### **Squadron: Undisclosed Lobbying By Any Other Name Still Stinks**

NEW YORK – As Republican state legislators descend on Tampa for the Republican National Convention, State Senator Daniel Squadron is urging legislators to pledge to disclose whether the American Legislative Exchange Council (ALEC) helps shape the bills they introduce.

ALEC's activities seem to qualify as lobbying, but it is not registered as a lobby in New York and many other states, and doesn't file the required disclosures. Squadron's petition urges state legislators and candidates for state legislature around the country to pledge to do the disclosing for ALEC and make clear whether the group is involved with the drafting of their bills.

[The petition and related pledge are available here.](#)

ALEC receives funding from corporate "members" while claiming responsibility for dozens of pieces of "model legislation" for which it actively advocates. [At a public forum on ALEC chaired by Senator Squadron earlier this summer](#), former NY State Lobby Commission

Executive Director David Grandeau said, "If [ALEC] spends more than \$5000 to advocate for passage of legislation in the state, they are a lobbyist and should be registered." Yet ALEC's not registered as a lobby. It's registered as a 501(c)(3) charitable organization – and receives the tax breaks given to one – despite receiving and spending funds from corporate members to advocate for or against legislation.

For example, ALEC claims that it had 39 model bills introduced in the New York legislature in 2010. It also hosts legislators at fully-paid-for "retreats" and issues "legislative resolutions" to be submitted by legislator-members in state houses around the country. Among the pieces of model legislation ALEC pushes are "Stand Your Ground" laws, Voter ID laws that require voters to present identification at the polls, and the notorious Arizona immigration law.

"ALEC spends thousands of corporate dollars a year to advocate for and against legislation. Legislators who are part of ALEC can call it what they want. But undisclosed lobbying by any other name still stinks. That's why I'm urging my colleagues in New York and around the country to take the pledge to disclose if ALEC helps shape their bills," said **Senator Squadron**.

**Susan Lerner**, Executive Director of Common Cause/NY said, "Lawmakers who introduce legislation, proposed or inspired by an organization, should be required to disclose that fact to the public. Any legitimate group which is in compliance with the state's lobbying laws should not protest being identified with a piece of legislation that they suggested, but rather should be proud to see their policy recommendations adopted by a member of the Legislature. Open collaboration between organizational sponsors and official legislative sponsors is public policy development at its best. New Yorkers should know who their legislators work with."

Earlier this year, Common Cause sent a letter to the New York Attorney General, urging him to investigate ALEC and its claim to be a charitable organization, despite evidence that it is,

in fact, a lobby.

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