



NEW YORK STATE SENATOR

Terry Gipson

## Op-Ed - Senator Terry Gipson: First 100 Days

TERRY GIPSON April 17, 2013



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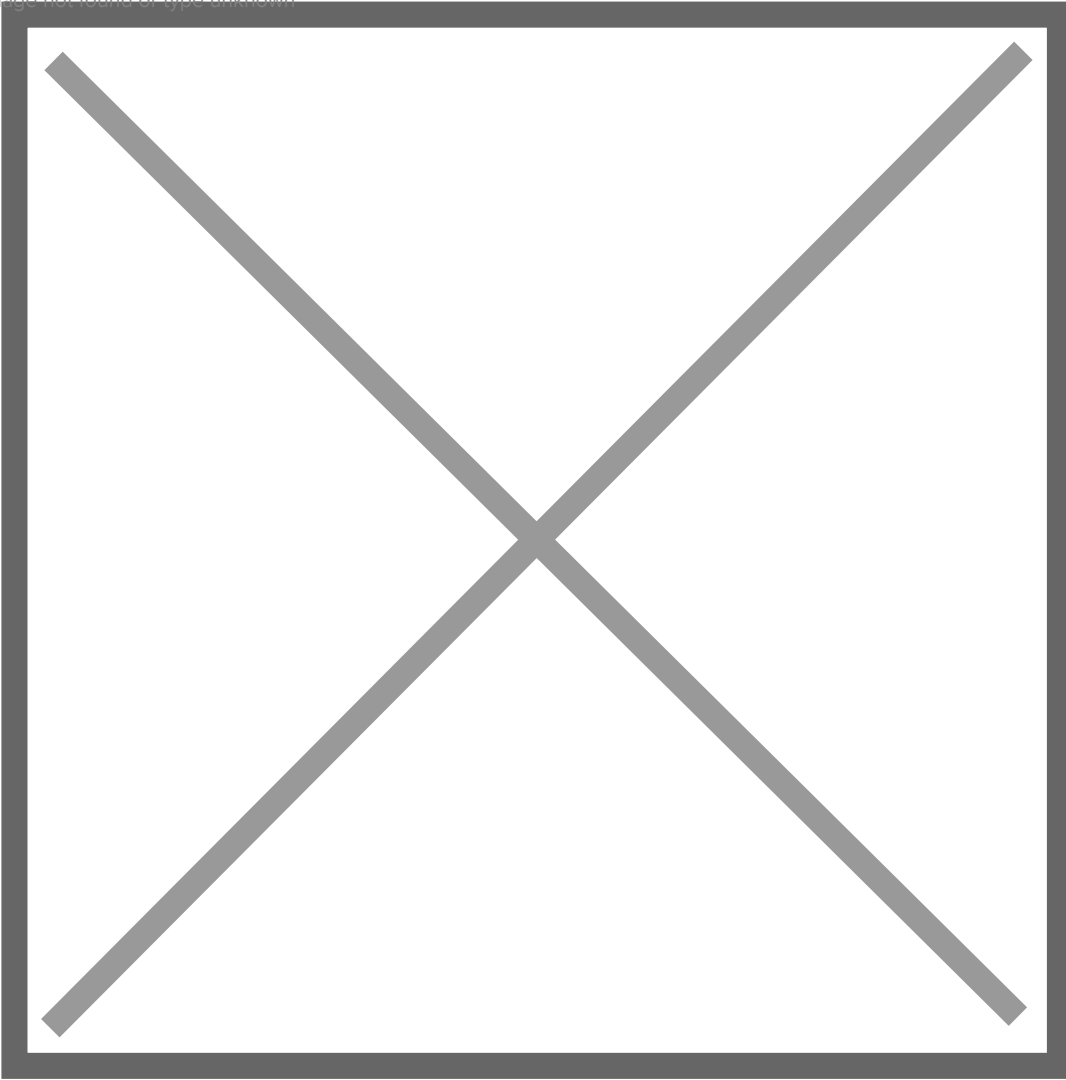
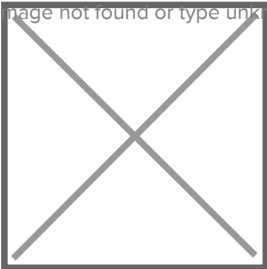


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In my first 100 days as a New York State Senator, I am proud that we have taken steps on the road to job creation and economic prosperity in the Hudson Valley and pledge to keep us on that path until our work is done and everyone can achieve the economic security they deserve.

Since being sworn in, I have met with over 40 public officials, 100 organizations, and have attended nearly 100 events across Dutchess and Putnam counties. Representing the 41st District, I've found that when we set aside party politics to focus on the needs of all Hudson Valley residents, we are able to get things done.

For 10 years our community has been calling for an overpass to carry Pudding Street over the Taconic State Parkway and help keep our children, whose school buses cross this busy intersection over 20 times a day, out of harm's way. As soon as I took office, I began working with colleagues on both sides of the aisle to address the issue, and I was proud to help obtain \$1 million for an engineering study to assess the proposed project and put it into motion.

Our region faced another urgent problem when we learned that the Beacon Correctional Facility would be closed, costing our area over 100 jobs. I was disappointed with and voted against the decision to shut down the facility, but I took action to make sure our community would come back stronger than ever, fighting to secure \$6 million dollars toward repurposing the site in a way that will create even more jobs in the future.

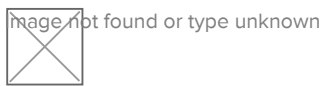
With an increased minimum wage and hundreds of millions of dollars in new business tax cuts, living and working in our region will become more affordable and sustainable. Our children and local governments will directly benefit from approximately \$9.5 million in additional school aid, improving education and reducing pressure to raise property taxes.

While I am proud of these accomplishments, there is still much more we must do. I've long been a staunch advocate for reducing energy costs on small businesses and families. When the state budget proposal only included a prolonged phase-out of the 18-a utility surcharge, I forced a vote in the Senate to eliminate this unfair tax immediately. Unfortunately, the Senate Republican Majority Coalition voted it down. I will continue fighting to end the surcharge and bring real relief to families, small business owners and farms in our region.

We also need to do more to support our local agricultural industry, which generates billions of dollars of economic activity in our communities. As the Ranking Member of the Agriculture and Local Government Committees, I drew on my family background in farming to propose legislation that will create a Local Produce Tax Credit, establish the DINE NY

program to support our farmers and restaurants, and reduce the cap on agricultural assessment value from 10 percent to 2 percent.

It is important that we fight for real reform within our government to increase transparency and ensure that our elected officials serve the public rather than their own private interests. New Yorkers deserve to know how their government operates, which is why I sponsored the Vampire Voting Act to restrict the Legislature from voting on bills in the dark of night. We also must hold elected officials who break the public trust accountable and root out corruption wherever it exists.



I look ahead with a clear focus on increasing economic opportunity, reducing the cost of living and doing business in the Hudson Valley and reforming our governmental process. Although there is much more work to be done, I am proud of our hard work in these first 100 days, and I will continue to fight for the economic future of the Hudson Valley.

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