



NEW YORK STATE SENATOR

Timothy M. Kennedy

Senator Kennedy Praises Plan to Launch Regional Workforce Advancement Center, Train 17,000 WNY Workers

TIMOTHY M. KENNEDY May 2, 2013

| ISSUE: **ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT**

*Plans to train and strengthen the workforce reflect concepts Kennedy proposed in his **legislation to address the “skills gap” and create “Centers for Workforce Achievement”** at community colleges across the state.*

BUFFALO, N.Y. – Senator Tim Kennedy, D-Buffalo, praised plans unveiled today to launch the Regional Workforce Advancement Center – which will seek to bridge the “skills gap”, or the divide between the skills employers need and those possessed by local workers. Kennedy praised Governor Andrew Cuomo’s decisive action to help train local workers with this regional hub for advanced manufacturing skills development.

Late last year, **Kennedy proposed legislation (S.539a) to establish “Centers of Workforce Achievement”** at community colleges across the state. Kennedy’s bill was similarly designed to re-tool our workforce for high-tech advanced manufacturing jobs.

“Each month, it has been estimated at least 1000 local manufacturing jobs go unfilled, even though many Western New Yorkers are out looking for jobs every day,” Kennedy said.

“Action is urgently needed to bridge this gap, and today’s announcement is an important step in the right direction. I applaud Governor Cuomo for recognizing this local economic need and helping us address it.

“Last summer, I proposed a plan to establish Centers of Workforce Achievement at community colleges across the state,” he added. “The concepts I proposed in our initial legislation are built into the Regional Workforce Advancement Center plans that Governor Cuomo announced today. This is a great opportunity for local workers to secure good-paying jobs and for our region to encourage manufacturers to relocate or expand in Buffalo and Western New York.

“This plan follows a model that will work. Local stakeholders will collaborate to develop the educational curriculum and design the operations necessary to build a skilled workforce to match the needs of our regional economy. There are jobs out there, and this plan will help local workers get hired.”

According to the Governor’s office, it’s estimated that about 17,000 manufacturing jobs will open up between today and 2020 as a result of workers retiring and new job growth. The Regional Workforce Advancement Center will work to train new workers to take advantage of these employment opportunities.

###

Senator Timothy M. Kennedy represents the New York State Senate’s 63rd District, which is comprised of the town of Cheektowaga, the city of Lackawanna and nearly all of the city of Buffalo. More information is available at <http://kennedy.nysenate.gov>.