



NEW YORK STATE SENATOR

Cecilia Tkaczyk

## Tkaczyk: Single Primary Day will Protect Military Voting Rights, Save Taxpayers \$50 MILLION

CECILIA TKACZYK January 14, 2014

| ISSUE: **MILITARY AFFAIRS**

State Senator Cecilia Tkaczyk said the Senate should immediately vote on a bill passed yesterday by the Assembly to enact a single Primary Election date in June. Consolidating State and Federal primaries to a single day would protect the voting rights of military members serving overseas and would save taxpayers more than \$50 million every two year election cycle.

Senator Tkaczyk co-sponsored the measure in the Senate to consolidate the primaries and bring the state into compliance with the federal Military and Overseas Voter Empowerment (MOVE) Act. MOVE was enacted to ensure that votes from military personnel and Americans living abroad are received in time and counted.

“More than 43,000 New Yorkers, 11,000 of whom are active military men and women serving overseas, may not have their vote counted if we don’t pass this measure in the State Senate,” **Senator Tkaczyk said.** “To make matters worse, forcing taxpayers and local governments to pay an additional \$50 million for two separate Primary Day elections is an unconscionable and wasteful mandate.”

A Federal judge ordered the State to move Congressional elections from September to June to comply with the MOVE Act. However, the Federal court's decision does not affect State elections, and the Legislature would have to act to move the primary date for State primaries. Unfortunately, the Senate coalition leadership has refused to act, forcing the State to hold two separate primaries in 2012, in addition to the Presidential primary.

"The State Senate cannot ignore its responsibility in light of the Federal court's decision," **Senator Tkaczyk said.** "Every vote counts, and it is appalling that the Senate coalition leadership is willing to disenfranchise the very people who are overseas protecting our nation and our right to vote."

Consolidating Primary Day elections has wide support among good government groups, as well as elections commissioners and local elected officials.

Senator Tkaczyk is the ranking Democrat on the Senate Election Law Committee, and a member of the Senate Veterans, Homeland Security and Veteran's Affairs Committee.