



NEW YORK STATE SENATOR

Daniel L. Squadron

Squadron Announces Legislation to Standardize Cancer Fund Checkoff Programs, Ensure Prostate Cancer Funds Go to Intended Use

DANIEL L. SQUADRON January 16, 2014

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NEW YORK -- Today, State Senator Daniel Squadron announced legislation that would standardize the income tax return checkoff donation programs, bringing the prostate cancer fund in line with others and ensuring that the donations -- which are currently sitting unspent, waiting to be disbursed by a questionable organization that has lost its tax-exempt status -- go to their intended use. The Squadron legislation follows a [report released by State Comptroller Thomas DiNapoli](#) that highlighted a number of gaps in the tax checkoff programs, including the major issues with the prostate cancer fund.

"By standardizing the way tax checkoff donations are disbursed, this bill would address one of the many gaps highlighted by the Comptroller's report," said **Squadron**. "Even though checkoffs are voluntary, taxpayers deserve to know that their money is going to the cause they intended. It's simply unacceptable that \$1.8 million donated to the prostate cancer fund is sitting unused, waiting for a non-profit that doesn't exist to disburse it. The legislature must act to make sure these donations are put to their intended use."

The prostate cancer research and education tax checkoff was created in 2004 and New York taxpayers have since donated \$1.8 million -- but the researchers and education programs have not received any funds.

Unlike the seven other checkoffs, the legislation that underpins the prostate cancer checkoff narrowly limits the funds to a single, independent non-profit. For example, the breast cancer checkoff, like most other checkoffs, directs funds to a state-administered fund, rather than a single non-profit entity.

What's more, [according to recent press reports](#), the single non-profit that the prostate cancer fund was dedicated to -- the New York State Coalition to Cure Prostate Cancer -- "...did not exist before 2004, the year the checkoff law passed, and the Internal Revenue Service automatically revoked its federal tax-exempt status in 2011 for failing to submit required returns three years in a row. It has no website or readily available contact information online."

Squadron's legislation would bring the prostate cancer checkoff in line with other checkoff programs by repealing 95-e and replacing it with 95-h (based on the Breast Cancer Awareness fund creation section 97-YY). The new 95-h would:

- Establish a new title for the fund as the "New York State Prostate Cancer Research, Detection, and Education Fund."

- Direct dollars in the fund to DOH-approved prostate cancer research, detection, and education projects.
- Require a regular Comptroller report to the Governor and the legislature on the fund.

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