



NEW YORK STATE SENATOR

Cecilia Tkaczyk

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CECILIA TKACZYK February 18, 2014

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Legislators ask Gov to include funding in budget

Senator Tkaczyk's measure to reimburse local governments and property taxpayers for the cost of a second Primary Election has been introduced by Assemblyman Felix Ortiz, and the two legislators today requested the Governor include funding for the bill in his 30-day

budget amendments.

With the Congressional Primary process beginning in three weeks, and no agreement on the part of state legislators to consolidate state and local primaries, local governments and property taxpayers will likely have to pay for a second primary in September.

Tkaczyk last week introduced a bill requiring the State to reimburse local governments for the costs of the second primary, which have been estimated to be up to \$50 million.

“Once the petitions for the Congressional primary candidates start to circulate, on March 4th, we will lose the ability to change the primary date. We are three weeks away from having overburdened property taxpayers forced to foot the bill for a second and totally unnecessary primary this year,” said Senator Cecilia Tkaczyk, the bill’s author and prime sponsor in the Senate, where the measure (S.6417) has 11 co-sponsors.

Assembly sponsor Felix W. Ortiz said he introduced the bill (A.8740) in the Assembly because, “Forcing local governments to pay for two primaries will waste millions of dollars -- money that could be used for education, or veterans or mental health services in our communities.”

The legislation is in response to New York State’s failure to come into compliance with the Military and Overseas Voter Empowerment Act – known as the MOVE Act – enacted by Congress in 2009 to protect the rights of military members voting in federal elections regardless of where they are stationed.

The MOVE Act requires states to transmit absentee ballots to Americans working or serving in the military overseas no later than 45 days before a federal election, protecting the voting rights of more than 43,000 New Yorkers overseas, 11,000 of whom are active military.

The two legislators asked the Governor to use the process known as “30 day amendments” to add the reimbursement funding to his proposed Executive Budget for the next fiscal year. Democrats and Republicans estimate the cost to New York City and the counties to be between \$40 million and \$50 million in years when multiple primaries are held.