



NEW YORK STATE SENATOR

Joseph A. Griffo

## Senate Passes Four Griffo-Sponsored Bills: Alcohol, Schools, First Responders & Special Elections

JOSEPH A. GRIFFO June 11, 2014

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*Bills address powdered alcohol, Utica schools, first responders and special elections*

ALBANY – The New York State Senate today passed four bills sponsored by Sen. Joseph A. Griffo, including a bill to ban powdered alcohol, one to help Utica schools and another to protect first responders, and a fourth to limit government and empower voters regarding statewide offices.

The bills were:

- **S3008**: Provides for a special election, at the governor's discretion, to fill vacancies in the office of comptroller, attorney general and U.S. senator. The bill passed, 53-4, unofficially. A companion bill is in the Assembly Governmental Operations Committee.

"Our attorney general, comptroller and U.S. Senators are some of the most important positions in the state. But voters are shut out of the process to pick their successor when those leaders leave their posts early. This bill restores the voice of the people, while limiting the power of the government."

- **S7193**: Authorizes the Utica school district to require certain children who are five years old to attend kindergarten. The bill was introduced at the request of the school board and its administrators. The bill passed, 58-0, unofficially. Assemblyman Anthony Brindisi, D-Utica, sponsored a companion bill, which passed the Assembly 120-10 on June 2.

“The Utica City School District provides a full-day kindergarten because it properly prepares the children to learn and to engage with others – skills they use throughout their school careers. This bill gives the Utica City School District the same powers as the Syracuse, Rochester and New York City schools have,” said Griffo.

- **S7217A**: Prohibits the sale of any powdered alcohol product. The bill passed, 57-1, unofficially. A companion bill is in the Assembly Economic Development Committee.

“Powdered alcohol is so easy to transport and hide in a pocket, making it more portable than a bottle or flask of liquor. It could be used illegally by young people and brought into schools and other venues that prohibit alcohol consumption. There could also be serious health risks from snorting this product to get alcohol directly to the brain. It could even be sprinkled onto someone’s food or in their drink without the other person’s knowledge,” said Griffo.

- **S7084**: Provides coverage for volunteer firefighters and volunteer ambulance workers performing emergency services. Municipalities will be able to opt-into the law, if approved. The bill passed, 58-0, unofficially. Assemblyman Bill Magnarelli, D-Syracuse, sponsored a companion bill, which passed the Assembly.

“Workers compensation is designed to support workers hurt on the job. This bill closes a loophole in the law that does not protect certain first responders before an ‘officer in command’ is established at a scene. This will allow firefighters and ambulance workers to immediately attend to victims without worrying about if any injury will be covered,” said Griffo.