Senator Golden Hosted Roundtable on Growing the Future in Computer And Video Game Development in New York

MARTIN J. GOLDEN   September 18, 2014

Brooklyn, NY – On Tuesday, September 16, the New York State Senate Committee on Science, Technology, Incubation, & Entrepreneurship, chaired by State Senator Martin J. Golden, sponsored "Growing The Future in Computer and Video Game Development in New York" to discuss expanding the $111 billion dollar industry in New York.

The roundtable discussion was hosted at Kingsborough Community College, and featured representatives of some of the top game development companies in New York State and the

country, as well as representatives of academic institutions, museums, individual entrepreneurs, and representatives from the Entertainment Software Association, the main association representing game development companies.

The consensus among the participants was that New York is on the brink of breaking out as a place for game development and high paying tech jobs. The requirements are a university system that produces exceptional talent, tech hubs, and tax incentives. The companies are rational economic actors, who can put their jobs anywhere in the world. There is a way to structure these components. New York has every other aspect that it needs. New York has five of the top 25 game development schools in the county, exceptional talent, two of the largest game companies in the world, and new economic development programs that can come together to incentivize development here.

The stakes are potentially big, as the game industry is very large. According to the latest statistics:

Gaming generates $21 billion domestically and $79 billion worldwide in sales (2012)

The projection is $111 billion worldwide in sales in 2015, according to Gartner

There are 61 Developers & Publishers in NY; 34 in New York City alone and nearly 100 in the state with more than 5,400 direct and indirect jobs

Average compensation for New York game developers is $96,602

33 colleges, universities, and trade schools in NY offer video game design courses and/or degrees

"Gaming has a footprint in the area, but we lag behind California, Texas, and Washington in the number of companies, employees, and contributions to the economy," said Senator

Golden. "The purpose of the roundtable is to collect the facts and ideas from the best in the industry, the university, the government, and the entrepreneurs so that we can create policy and program that will make us the center of the game software universe."

Among those in attendance were Gruha Bala, Co-Founder of Vicarious Visions, and Rowan Hajaj, Head of Finance & Corporate Development of Rockstar Games. These two companies represent the largest employers of the gaming software industry in New York State, and are leaders in their fields. The session was also attended by representatives of other game companies, academic institutions, the State agency Empire State Development Corporation, the Entertainment Software Association, which is the association representing game companies, and individual entrepreneurs.

For more information on the New York State Senate Committee on Science, Technology, Incubation & Entrepreneurship or to view the entire Roundtable discussion, visit http://www.nysenate.gov/committee/science-technology-incubation-and-entrepreneurship