



NEW YORK STATE SENATOR

Andrea Stewart-Cousins

## Press Release: Senator Stewart-Cousins Outlines Legislative Priorities in Her 2015 Legislative Session Opening Remarks

ANDREA STEWART-COUSINS January 8, 2015

Albany, NY - State Senator Andrea Stewart-Cousins took the oath of office Wednesday with her children by her side, continuing her historic leadership role in New York, as the first female legislative conference leader (elected 2012, re-elected 2014), and the first female State Senate Minority Leader.

In her opening remarks delivered on the Senate floor, Senator Stewart-Cousins thanked her constituents for re-electing her and her Democratic colleagues for their continued support. She pledged to make Albany an example of good government. “We will not allow partisan bickering to obstruct our efforts to serve our constituents and together we will give all New Yorkers the responsible and productive government they deserve.”

Senator Stewart-Cousins outlined her legislative priorities in 2015, including: criminal justice reforms and police protections, increasing the minimum wage, and passing the Women’s Equality Act to provide women with equal pay and personal protections including reproductive health care.

“And finally let’s make sure we use the surplus settlement funds in a responsible manner that will help set New York on an even brighter path,” she added. “Since so much of this money was from housing settlements, it is crucial we use it to create affordable housing across the state. We also need to protect and expand our infrastructure, including the

Tappan Zee Bridge and others roads and bridges, and fix our crumbling schools. We can do all this while at the same time providing relief to local communities and creating jobs across the state.”

During her remarks, she also acknowledged the loss of former Governor Mario Cuomo, whose funeral she attended. “Sadly, for too many fellow New Yorkers, the two cities that Governor Cuomo so eloquently spoke of in 1984 still exist today, but we have an opportunity to finally unite them. We can work towards making a more just and fair society. A society that provides jobs and opportunities to all New Yorkers. A society that deals with crushing income inequality. Where everyone has a quality education. Where it doesn’t matter if you are from Elmira, or New York City or even Yonkers because you are given a shot at the American dream.”

[To read the full script or see the video of the Senator's remarks, click here.](#)