



NEW YORK STATE SENATOR

Andrea Stewart-Cousins

## Important Bills Passed This Week: Stimulating Energy Conservation, Expanding Green Geothermal Energy Use, The CARE Act

ANDREA STEWART-COUSINS April 27, 2015



### **IMPORTANT BILLS PASSED THIS WEEK**

**Andrea Stewart-Cousins**  
*Senate Democratic Leader*  
*New York State Senator, 35th District*

**Stimulating Energy Conservation:** Energy Star appliances are certified by the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) to provide significant energy conservation as compared to other models in their product categories. Many energy providers and agencies already offer discounts or rebates on services for purchasing or using Energy Star equipment to encourage consumers and businesses to reduce their energy usage and carbon footprints. Senate Bill S1804 exempts Energy Star appliances from state sales and compensating use taxes and offer

local governments the option to offer additional exemptions. By making upgrades more affordable it would encourage replacement of less efficient models with Energy Star certified products.

**Expanding Green Geothermal Energy Use:** Senate Bill S.2905 would incentivize property owners to purchase and use geothermal energy systems to heat and cool buildings by providing a 25% tax credit on qualifying systems up to a \$5,000 threshold. Geothermal energy systems harness the ambient heat that is continuously generated by magma beneath the Earth's crust to produce electricity or heat buildings. Use of geothermal energy systems is growing worldwide as a sustainable, less polluting and economical home heating and cooling technology.

**The CARE Act:** The CARE Act (S.676A) would allow patients to designate a caregiver during admission and require that hospitals include the caregiver in medical discussions and provide detailed instructions for patient care. An estimated 4.1 million New Yorkers provide unreimbursed care to adults who need assistance with their daily lives. Most caregivers are family members or close friends who are often asked to assist with mobility, eating, dressing, and complex tasks like administering multiple medications in proper dosages, operating medical equipment and caring for wounds. Caregivers are often excluded from medical discussions and are inadequately prepared to provide the prescribed care for patients after discharge. The CARE Act will help reduce Medicaid costs associated with hospital readmissions by an estimated \$17 billion per year according to the federal Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services (CMS).