



NEW YORK STATE SENATOR

William Larkin

Statement by Senator Bill Larkin on Outside Income

WILLIAM LARKIN January 5, 2016

Public service is a laudable field, and we should do everything possible to ensure that civic-minded, community-oriented men and women have the opportunity and ability to serve. Part of service is having a code of conduct, a sense of justice and abiding the highest ethical standards possible. These standards and moral compass were instilled in me during my military service and I've been proud to bring them with me into public service, the cornerstone of my life and career, and I am working hard to ensure that our residents have state leaders that follow the same rigorous standards I've held myself to over the years.

As an official, you have a responsibility to those who voted you into office to serve them, not yourself. It's a disservice to the people you represent to use your position to further your own ambitions. That's why I joined my colleagues in the Senate this year in passing legislation that would strip all corrupt elected officials who break the law of their taxpayer-funded pension. It was disheartening to see this crucial measure stall in the New York City-centric Assembly this past year, and I plan on working to ensure that our residents don't have to pay for the retirement of politicians who violated their trust.

Along with stripping corrupt officials of their pension, we must take steps to ensure that no elected official should use his or her post to accumulate unchecked, entrenched power. The people of our state deserve fresh ideas and leaders that treat their position as a privilege, not a right. By capping the term of legislative leaders to 8 years, our legislature would continually

receive fresh leadership and ideas, plus no one individual can turn a leadership post into a personal fiefdom. I was proud to work with my Senate colleagues to pass this common-sense reform and I hope Assembly Democrats will take this measure up as well.

If candidates and lawmakers can't work outside of their legislative duties, only the wealthy elite could afford to run for office and serve. Our state government was intended to encourage citizen-legislators, everyday people who work and serve in the community, who run for office because that daily experience makes them best-suited to represent the people in his or her community. This is why banning lawmakers from earning outside employment income simply won't work. I do not believe in contributing to the creation of an environment that breeds professional politicians.

Serving as a Senator or Assemblyman shouldn't be a lucrative endeavor. These positions are intended to encourage good men and women, dedicated to improving their communities, to hold office for the purpose of making our state a better place. That's my motivation as a Senator. That should be every legislators' motivation, and I plan to continue working to ensure that those in the Senate and Assembly put your needs before their own. After all, that's how government is supposed to work.