



NEW YORK STATE SENATOR

Susan Serino

SERINO: REFORM MEANS GIVING POWER DIRECTLY TO THE PEOPLE

SUSAN SERINO June 13, 2016

| ISSUE: **ETHICS REFORM**



ALBANY, NY—Senator Sue Serino (R, C, I—Hyde Park) announced today that she has introduced significant legislation that will ensure government truly works for the people by giving voters the ability to recall their state elected officials.

“I came to Albany to shake things up,” said Senator Serino who has been outspoken in her calls for ethics reform. “If we are serious about putting an end to Albany’s pervasive culture of corruption, we need to put real power directly into the hands of the people to ensure that those elected officials who brazenly violate the public’s trust can be held accountable. At a time when there is clear public unrest with the

current state of affairs in Albany, reinstating a level of integrity to the institution of state government and restoring the public's trust needs to be our number one priority before the end of this Legislative Session."

Serino's bill (S. 8069) would signal a significant institutional change by amending the State Constitution to allow New Yorkers to utilize a direct vote to remove elected officials from office before their term has ended. Under Serino's bill, those positions eligible for recall include any Governor, Lieutenant Governor, Attorney General, Comptroller, State Legislator, County Executive, Mayor or Town Supervisor who has been indicted for a felony or convicted with a misdemeanor related to their public office.

The bill would require that a petition for recall be submitted to the State Board of Elections within ninety days of the indictment or conviction and would require a percentage of signatures set in relation to number of votes garnered in the most recent election held for the position in question.

As Serino notes in the bill's justification, the recall process has been utilized in the United States since the beginning of the twentieth century and to date, twenty states, in addition to the District of Columbia, permit some form of recall for elected officials.

"Given the alarming number of elected officials charged with violating the public trust, this legislation represents a major step in holding elected officials accountable and in ensuring that responsiveness and responsibility to the people remain the priority of those in public office," Serino continued.

"It's about getting rid of the bad apples so that government can operate efficiently, effectively, and for the people. It's time to show New Yorkers that we are serious about reform. I urge my colleagues in both Houses to make this legislation a priority in the coming days."