



NEW YORK STATE SENATOR

Jack M. Martins

## Governor Signs Senator Martins' Legislation To Enhance Career Opportunities for New Yorkers

JACK M. MARTINS September 15, 2016

| ISSUE: **WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT**

Senator Jack M. Martins (R-7th Senate District) announced that legislation he sponsored to enhance career opportunities for New Yorkers was recently signed into law by Governor Andrew Cuomo.

The new law (Chapter 325 of 2016) requires the State Department of Labor, working in conjunction with the State Education Department, to provide school districts and community colleges with forward facing employment data so that they know which fields are likely to have a demand for skilled workers to fill open jobs over the next several years. This will help them advise students about those fields and what courses of study or training they need to pursue in order to obtain employment in them.

“Right now there are over 100,000 open jobs in New York State because employers cannot find properly trained workers to fill them. High schools and community colleges need forward facing data that will enable them to proactively steer students towards successful, in-demand career paths, rather than reactively shepherding them to jobs that may become obsolete in the coming years. This law ensures that they will receive that data so they can advise students, prepare them to fill these jobs and develop new training programs to meet the job market's demands. I applaud Governor Cuomo for signing this legislation that will

help more people achieve meaningful, full-time employment,” said Senator Martins, Chairman of the Senate’s Labor Committee.

The law was one of the recommendations put forth by the Senate’s Task Force on Workforce Development, which Senator Martins co-chairs. The Task Force was created to examine ways to bridge the unemployment gap by improving the connections between prospective employees and employers looking to hire new skilled workers. The recommendations were developed with extensive input from leaders in business, labor, public education, higher education, local governments, and workforce training and development. Public hearings were held throughout the state to receive stakeholder input.

“Higher education must keep a close eye on the quality of programs and the value of the credentials produced to ensure graduates can meet employers’ needs and demands,” said Suffolk County Community College President Dr. Shaun L. McKay. “As a result of Senator Martins’ bill, now law, the data received from the Department of Labor will help guide our college as we create new programs and ensure our students have a bright future here on Long Island.”

"On behalf of 250,000 unionists and their families in Nassau and Suffolk Counties I would like to applaud Senator Jack Martins for sponsoring this legislation and Governor Andrew Cuomo for signing it into law. We've proven through Opportunities Long Island, a pre-apprentice program that provides access to high quality careers in the unionized construction industry, that we can address the economic needs and provide the training necessary for successful economic development in our region. This legislation will provide the data, infrastructure, support and coordination from New York State to expand the Opportunities Long Island model to other sectors of our economy," said John R. Durso, President of the Long Island Federation of Labor, AFL-CIO.

“We are grateful to the Senate Task Force’s efforts to understand and shine a spotlight on the unemployment gap, or the gap that exists between employers with open jobs and individuals prepared for those jobs. A process that uses forward-facing data to promote an improved understanding of in-demand careers will go a long way toward reducing this gap – placing individuals into jobs and filling employer needs. Workforce Development Institute regional staff were happy to participate in the task force hearings in several areas of the state. We look forward to working with both the Department of Education and the New York State Department of Labor on this important initiative,” said Ed Murphy, Executive Director for the Workforce Development Institute.

“Hundreds of jobs go unfilled and career opportunities are missed every month because of the disconnect between employer needs and jobseeker skills. The hearings led by Senator Martins gave voice to crucial Long Island industry leaders and will help move the region closer to closing that gap,” said Rosalie Drago, Long Island Regional Director for the Workforce Development Institute.