



NEW YORK STATE SENATOR

Michael H. Ranzenhofer

## New Law Helps to Expedite FOIL Requests

SENATOR MIKE RANZENHOFER November 30, 2016

| ISSUE: **FOIL**

A new law— sponsored by State Senator Michael H. Ranzenhofer— will prevent state agencies from delaying the release of documents for months, and even years, as part of a request under the state’s freedom of information laws (FOIL).

Currently, state law grants agencies as many as nine months to appeal a court’s decision that the agency improperly denied a FOIL request or failed to properly relinquish the information. Under the new law, agencies will have only two months to appeal the decision.

“Unnecessary delay in the FOIL process is an injustice to all New Yorkers and ultimately a disservice to our democratic ideals. FOIL inquiries serve as an important watchdog on decisions and actions taken by public officials. This new law will ensure greater transparency and restore faith in our state government by stopping agencies from slowing down the FOIL process,” said Ranzenhofer.

The new law has been recommended by Reinvent Albany and the Committee on Open Government. Civic groups, journalists and advocates have complained agencies stall FOIL requests that may result in the disclosure of embarrassing details. In some cases, it has taken years to receive the requested information.

The legislation, S.6865, passed both houses of the State Legislature unanimously in June. Governor Cuomo signed the bill into law earlier this week.

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#### RELATED LEGISLATION

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### **2015-S6865A**

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- Introduced
  
- ◦ In Committee Assembly
  - In Committee Senate
  
- ◦ On Floor Calendar Assembly
  - On Floor Calendar Senate
  
- ◦ Passed Assembly
  - Passed Senate
  
- Delivered to Governor
  
- Signed By Governor
  
- 

Limits the amount of time to appeal certain judgments regarding freedom of information violations

March 02, 2016

Signed by Governor

Sponsored by **Michael H. Ranzenhofer**

Do you support this bill?