



NEW YORK STATE SENATOR

Michael Gianaris

Senator Gianaris' Bill Banning Taxpayer Bailouts of Politicians' Legal Bills Advances Out of Committee

MICHAEL GIANARIS May 15, 2018

| ISSUE: **CORRUPTION, ETHICS, S2394, CAMPAIGN FINANCE REFORM**



ALBANY, N.Y. – Senator Michael Gianaris announced the New York State Senate Committee on Investigations and Government Operations passed his legislation banning state tax dollars from being used to bail out legal expenses incurred by political campaigns by a vote of 7-2.

“It is an outrageous abuse of taxpayer dollars for public monies to reimburse criminal defendants’ campaign accounts,” said Senator Michael Gianaris. “Taxpayers should not be paying for the campaigns of those accused of crimes.”

Under current law, politicians can use their campaign committees as legal defense funds if charged with a crime. If acquitted, the campaign committee may recoup attorney’s fees from the state. The politicians can then use that money to run for office or donate to other candidates. Former Senate Majority Leader Joseph Bruno did just that in 2014 – donating his windfall of over a million dollars from state taxpayers directly to Senate Republicans.

Senator Gianaris’ proposal would prohibit campaign committees from seeking reimbursement from the state for their legal expenses.

The legislation now moves to the Senate Finance Committee for consideration. The text of the bill is available here: <https://www.nysenate.gov/legislation/bills/2017/S2394>.

RELATED LEGISLATION

2017-S2394

- 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

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Prohibits state reimbursement of campaign and political committees, legal defense fund for payments made on behalf of the criminal defense of a state employee

January 13, 2017

In Senate Committee **Finance**

Sponsored by **Michael Gianaris**

Do you support this bill?