



NEW YORK STATE SENATOR

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Say No To Rampant Absenteeism: Senate Republicans Distribute Attendance Pledge Ahead Of Vote On June Primaries

JOHN J. FLANAGAN January 14, 2019

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Ranking member of the New York State Senate Elections Committee Senator Cathy Young (R-Cattaraugus) and members of the Republican Conference today called on every member of the New York State Senate to pledge perfect attendance in advance of legislation before the house to consolidate the date of federal and state primaries.

The pledge calls on each representative to commit their attendance every calendared session day in Albany from what could be the start of the petitioning process at the end of February through the month of June, which would become the new primary season.

State primaries are currently held in September and federal primaries are held in June.

This promise reaffirms a commitment to the public and promises no repeat of the empty chair left by Adriano Espaillat, who twice abandoned his duties in Albany to run for a Congressional seat in New York City. In 2014, Espaillat missed more than any other member of the Senate, a total of 891 votes. During his first unsuccessful June bid, he even outpaced a Democratic Senator facing corruption charges in court. In 2016, again, Espaillat was derelict in his Senate duties and simply didn't show up in order to win a Congressional seat in New York City.

"Every Senator must remember that we serve the people, not ourselves. This pledge is a reminder that the people elect us to be their voices in the state capitol and they rely on us to be here, not absent and on the campaign trail as we have seen before. Empty chairs are simply empty promises to New Yorkers. Let's show the public that we hold ourselves to the highest standards and sign this pledge," said Senator Young.

The pledge, attached below, was distributed to every state Senator. Every member of the Republican Conference has signed on.

The public will be updated on responses @nysenateGOP.

Senate Republicans have already passed legislation in prior legislative sessions to consolidate the federal and state primaries to the month of August, in accordance with the federal deadline to collect military ballots and closer to the season when New Yorkers traditionally vote.

January 14, 2019

Dear Senator (NAME):

Today, you will consider a piece of legislation (S1103) which would consolidate federal and state primary dates. This would result in a singular primary in June, during the last calendared month of the annual New York State legislative session.

Before voting on the bill before the house, we invite you to pledge your commitment to New York State residents and the constituents you represent to be present every legislative day to ensure the people's work is done.

Absence in Albany by Senators in contested primaries would hinder the business of the house. We do not want to return to the bad old days, long in the rearview, when sessions ran far beyond schedule into the summer months and work came to a halt. Nor, do we want districts to lack representation because their representative is campaigning. Absence from session is only acceptable in the event of sickness or emergency.

Pledge your commitment to attending session from the time petitioning begins at the end of through the end of the campaign in June by signing your name below and return it to nyssenaterepublicans@gmail.com: