

Political April 2018

4/5/18-DEMOCRATS ARE POISED TO TAKE CONTROL OF THE STATE SENATE FOR THE FIRST TIME IN CLOSE TO A DECADE. YESTERDAY MAINSTREAM DEMOCRATS LEAD BY GOVERNOR CUOMO ANNOUNCED THE DISSOLUTION OF THE BREAKAWAY INDEPENDENT DEMOCRATIC CONFERENCE. THAT GROUP HAD EFFECTIVELY GIVEN REPUBLICANS CONTROL OF THE SENATE BY FRACTURING THE DEMOCRATS. WITH THE TWO FACTIONS REUNITED CONTROL OF THE SENATE WILL BE DECIDED BY A PAIR OF DOWNSTATE SPECIAL ELECTIONS LATER THIS MONTH.

4/11/18-ASKING A PROSPECTIVE EMPLOYEE HOW MUCH THEY MADE AT THEIR LAST JOB COULD SOON BE A CRIME. GOVERNOR CUOMO HAS PROPOSED LEGISLATION BANNING QUESTIONS ABOUT A WORKER'S SALARY HISTORY BY BOTH PUBLIC AND PRIVATE EMPLOYERS. OFFICIALS SAY THE LAW IS NEEDED TO HELP CLOSE THE GENDER PAY GAP BECAUSE WOMEN ALLEGEDLY AREN'T GOOD AT NEGOTIATING WITH EMPLOYERS. THE STATE ALREADY HAS A POLICY AGAINST ASKING IT'S OWN PROSPECTIVE HIRES ABOUT SALARY HISTORY.

4/13/18-IS IT TIME TO LEGALIZE RECREATIONAL MARIJUANA IN NEW YORK? CYNTHIA NIXON SAYS YES. SHE'S CHALLENGING GOVERNOR CUOMO IN THE DEMOCRATIC PRIMARY FOR GOVERNOR, AND SAYS HE'S WAFFLED ON THE SUBJECT FOR YEARS. CUOMO HAS BEEN OPPOSED TO LEGALIZATION, BUT THE PROGRESSIVE WING OF HIS PARTY SAYS LEGALIZATION IS NOT ONLY A POTENTIAL SOURCE OF REVENUE BUT A MATTER OF RACIAL JUSTICE. THE OVERWHELMING MAJORITY OF PRISONERS BEHIND BARS FOR MARIJUANA POSSESSION AND SALE ARE BLACK.

4/17/18-THE STATE IS PLANNING A MAJOR CRACKDOWN ON ILLEGAL TOBACCO SALES. OVER HALF THE CIGARETTES SOLD IN THE STATE ARE SMUGGLED IN AND DON'T HAVE TAX STAMPS, LOSING NEW YORK MILLIONS IN TAX REVENUE. THE SOURCE OF THAT MISSING MONEY IS THE \$4.35 TAX ON EVERY PACK OF SMOKES. THAT HUGE PREMIUM IS WHAT MAKES SMUGGLING CIGARETTES SO LUCRATIVE. THE NEW INITIATIVE WILL TEAM TWELVE DIFFERENT AGENCIES TO TRACK DOWN ILLEGAL SALES AND SEIZE FUNDS AND ASSETS CONNECTED TO SMUGGLING OPERATIONS.

4/19/18-CONGRESSWOMAN CLAUDIA TENNEY SET OFF A FIRESTORM YESTERDAY AFTER SHE CAME OUT AGAINST THE USE OF EMINENT

DOMAIN FOR UTICA'S DOWNTOWN HOSPITAL PROJECT. IN A STATEMENT SHE SAID THE SEIZURE OF BUSINESSES IN THE FOOTPRINT OF THE PROJECT WAS AN EGREGIOUS TAKING OF CONSTITUTIONAL RIGHTS. THAT PROVOKED A SWIFT RESPONSE FROM UTICA MAYOR ROBERT PALMIERI AND ONEIDA COUNTY EXECUTIVE ANTHONY PICENTE, WHO DEFENDED THE PROJECT AS A MUCH NEEDED BOOST TO THE AREA'S HEALTHCARE.

4/20/18- NEW YORK SHOULD PROVIDE ILLEGAL IMMIGRANTS WITH DRIVER'S LICENSES. THAT'S ACCORDING TO LEGISLATORS IN ALBANY, WHO ARE MAKING A PUSH TO PASS THE CONTENTIOUS PROPOSAL BEFORE THE END OF THE LEGISLATIVE SESSION. SUPPORTERS SAY THE MEASURE WOULD GENERATE CLOSE TO SIXTY MILLION DOLLAR FOR THE STATE. UNDER THE MEASURE THE STATE DEPARTMENT OF MOTOR VEHICLES WOULD DESTROY ALL THE APPLICATIONS FOR A DRIVERS LICENSE TO PREVENT FEDERAL IMMIGRATION AUTHORITIES FROM COLLECTING THE RECORDS.

4/24/18-THE DAYS OF PLASTIC BAGS IN NEW YORK COULD BE NUMBERED. YESTERDAY GOVERNOR CUOMO CAME OUT IN FAVOR OF LEGISLATION THAT WOULD OUTLAW THE FAMILIAR SHOPPING BAGS AND IMPOSE A TEN CENT FEE FOR PAPER BAGS. THE MOVE IS DESIGNED TO CUT BACK ON THE 23 BILLION PLASTIC BAGS NEW YORKERS USE EVERY YEAR. SUPPORTERS OF THE BILL SAY THEY CLOG LANDFILLS AND POLLUTE THE ENVIRONMENT. THE BAN WOULDN'T APPLY TO PLASTIC BAGS USED BY RESTAURANTS OR TO PACKAGE BULK PURCHASES OF MEAT OR PRODUCE.

4/24/18-SHOULD PATIENTS WHO ARE TERMINALLY ILL BE ABLE TO COMMIT SUICIDE? THAT WAS THE FOCUS OF THE FIRST OF TWO HEARINGS ON THE SUBJECT IN ALBANY YESTERDAY. LEGISLATORS ARE CONSIDERING A MEASURE THAT WOULD ALLOW PHYSICIANS TO PRESCRIBE LETHAL DOSES OF MEDICATION TO PATIENTS WITHOUT ANY HOPE OF RECOVERY. THE AID IN DYING MEASURE WOULD REQUIRE THE APPROVAL OF TWO DOCTORS. OPPONENTS OF THE PROPOSAL SAY THE STATE SHOULD FOCUS ON PROVIDING BETTER HOSPICE AND PAIN MANAGEMENT SERVICES FOR THE TERMINALLY ILL.

4/26/18-GOVERNOR CUOMO IS GOING TO WAR WITH THE UNITED STATES IMMIGRATION AND CUSTOMS ENFORCEMENT AGENCY. DURING A PRESS CONFERENCE YESTERDAY HE THREATENED TO SUE THE FEDERAL

AGENCY FOR WHAT HE CALLED UNCONSTITUTIONAL RAIDS. AS AN EXAMPLE HE POINTED TO LAST WEEK'S ARREST OF AN ILLEGAL IMMIGRANT AT A FARM IN ROME. 31 YEAR OLD MARCIAL DELION AGUILUAR HAD ALREADY BEEN DEPORTED THREE TIMES WHEN HE WAS PICKED UP, ONCE AFTER BEING CONVICTED OF AGGRAVATED ASSAULT.

4/26/18-YOU'LL HAVE PLENTY OF CHOICES IN THIS FALL'S CONGRESSIONAL ELECTION. CONGRESSWOMAN CLAUDIA TENNEY AND HER CHALLENGER ASSEMBLYMAN ANTHONY BRINDISI HAVE BOTH SECURED MULTIPLE PARTY LINES ON THE BALLOT. TENNEY WILL BE ON THE REPUBLICAN, CONSERVATIVE, AND REFORM PARTY LINES, WHILE BRINDISI HAS NOTCHED THE DEMOCRATIC, INDEPENDENCE, WOMEN'S EQUALITY, AND WORKING FAMILY PARTIES. VOTING FOR THE 22ND CONGRESSIONAL RACE WILL TAKE PLACE ON NOVEMBER SIXTH.

4/30/18-NEW YORK NEEDS TO REFORM IT'S TICKET LAWS. THAT'S ACCORDING TO MEMBERS OF THE MUSIC INDUSTRY WHO WANT THE STATE LEGISLATURE TO PASS NEW RULES BY THE END OF THIS SESSION. THEY'RE THROWING THEIR SUPPORT BEHIND A BILL THAT WOULD REQUIRE SELLERS TO DECLARE WHAT PERCENTAGE OF SEATS ARE ACTUALLY BEING MADE AVAILABLE TO THE PUBLIC, HOW MANY TICKETS ARE BEING HELD BACK FOR FAN CLUBS AND SPECIAL PRE-SALE ARRANGEMENTS, AND BAN THE RESALE OF TICKETS WITHIN 48 HOURS OF A CONCERT GOING ON SALE.