

## **Independence Party of America Chairman Frank MacKay on the New York State Reform Movement**

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ISLANDIA, NY - "The surprising events of recent days have left many New Yorkers wondering if our legislature in Albany has decayed into complete and meaningless chaos.

The chaos may be real, but the current drive toward a more democratic coalition government represents the best hope we have for reforming the draconian Senate rules of the past. The reforms are necessary regardless of who initiated them, and many more are needed.

Whether a region is represented by a Democrat, Republican, or an independent, all New Yorkers deserve to share equally in Member Item grants, have their legislation considered and brought to the floor, and finally, open meetings for all to witness.

At first look, the current situation may seem distasteful, but as the Chairman of the Independence Party of New York, I applaud the actions of Tom Golisano, the Founder of our Party, to pass a reform agenda. I also admire the courage of those who have demonstrated leadership in the face of intense public scrutiny, to bring critical reform measures to the forefront of the statewide dialogue.

Whatever may happen over the next few days and months, I urge everyone to put political affiliations aside and move to make Albany more democratic for all New Yorkers."

List of Reform Measures

- Term limits on Committee Chairs-Allow Committee Chairs to move legislation to the floor for votes
- Apply open meetings law to legislature committees including conference committees
- Allow Committee chairs to hire/fire staff.
- Require committee members to be present to vote in committee
- Allocate each member a base number of resources to operate offices efficiently regardless of party
- Putting a list of bills to be taken up that day on Internet 24 hours in advance and committee agendas a week in advance.
- Mandate a greater use of the conference committee procedure, including allowing the sponsor to call for its use.
- Restrict the use of public-funded legislative mailings.
- Create a New York State "C-SPAN" that adds context to sessions, hearings and committee meetings.
- A clear process to bring a bill to a vote on the Senate floor, such as a mandatory vote or a petition process where if 51% of the senators sign a petition a vote is automatically forced.
- Fair committee staff allocations for all senators.
- A ban on allowing only the Senate Rules Committee to sponsor controversial bills.
- Require that all legislation reported to the floor be accompanied by a public committee report that includes the purposes of the bill, proposed changes in law, section-by-section analysis, procedural history, committee votes, any members' views on the legislation, and the names of organizations in support or opposition to the legislation.

The Independence Party of America is a political party dedicated to voter's right and voting reform.

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[You can find this press release here](#)