



The Siren

Important News and Updates for NYSPFFA Members

Prepared by Hinman Straub and Corning Place Communications

May 2013

nyspffa.org

Vol. #1, Issue #9

NYS Professional Firefighters

**Michael
McManus**

President

Sam Fresina

Secretary/Treasurer

Frank DeMart

Executive
Vice-President

EXECUTIVE

OFFICE

119 Washington
Ave., Suite 306
Albany, NY 12210
518-436-8827
FAX: 518-436-8830

nyspffa.org

profire@nyspffa.org

GOVERNOR PROPOSES LOCAL GOVERNMENT RESTRUCTURING BOARD

Last week, Gov. Cuomo [announced](#) a plan under which local governments would be eligible for a portion of \$80 million in state aid if they agree to consolidation recommendations made by a new financial restructuring board.

The Governor said that the new entity he is proposing will help any "fiscally distressed" municipality with "voluntary" restructuring – essentially a final alternative before the local government would require a financial control board. The new panel — which must be approved by the Legislature — will be made up of outside restructuring experts, Division of Budget officials as well as representatives of the Attorney General's and Comptroller's offices. The panel would also offer an alternative to binding arbitration if the local government and Union agree to submit their dispute to the panel.

Any state aid would be contingent upon the acceptance and implementation of the panel's restructuring recommendations by the municipality. The Panel would not have the power to freeze or modify labor contracts. (*continued on next page*)

CALENDAR

May 22 & 23, 2013 — [Local Assistance State Team Training](#)

June 13, 2013 — [1st District Meeting](#) (Tonawanda)

June 6, 2013—[4th District Meeting](#) (Ithaca)

June 24-27, 2013—[NYSPFFA Annual Convention](#)

If you have any questions or concerns regarding the information in this newsletter, please contact Joseph Dougherty or John Black at (518) 436-0751. For other NYSPFFA matters, please contact Mike McManus or Sam Fresina at (518) 436-8827.

GOV. PROPOSES RESTRUCTURING BOARD (con't)

NYSPFF's primary focus over the last five weeks of the 2013 legislative will be to protect and extend our traditional rights to binding arbitration. This important protection ensures good faith in our labor negotiations, while providing the option of resolution via a third party if necessary.

ALBANY UPDATE *Governor Lays Out His End of Session Priorities*

With the end of the 2013 legislative session approaching, Gov. Cuomo has identified the issues that he will focus on passing before the Legislature completes its work for the year. His priorities include campaign finance reform, increasing penalties for public corruption, a women's agenda, passage of a constitutional amendment to allow and site casinos, restructuring of the Long Island Power Authority (LIPA), and creating a new entity that would work with local governments to address their financial problems.

SCANDALS CLOUD ALBANY

Since the state budget passed in late March, a series of scandals have left Albany reeling.

Bronx Assemblyman Eric Stevenson is charged with accepting a bribe (he has pled not guilty). Fellow Assemblyman Nelson Castro resigned as he pled guilty to perjury charges. Queens Senator Malcolm Smith is charged with trying to buy off city Republican leaders to get on the city mayoral ballot.

Former Senate Minority Leader John Sampson is charged with embezzling money from home foreclosures he was handling. And just before ex-Senator Shirley Huntley was sentenced to prison for embezzling public funds, she wore a wire for the FBI. According to court document, she recorded nine people – eight of whom are now under FBI investigation.

And this week, Assemblyman Vito Lopez (and former Brooklyn boss) resigned his seat in a sexual harassment scandal. (But he's still running for New York City Council this fall.)

As a result, Gov. Cuomo and the legislative leaders are yet again talking about another revision of the state's ethics and public corruption laws.

In fact, one state Senator has [announced](#) that bookies are taking bets as to which public official gets indicted next.

McManus: WHY BINDING ARBITRATION IS IMPORTANT

NYPFFA President Michael McManus writes that "Meaningful Contract Reform Starts With A Commitment to Fairness and Fact." Read his full article [here](#).

NYSPFFA PARTICIPATES IN EMS REFORM ROUNDTABLE

On May 14, 2013, Sam Fresina of the NYSPFFA participated in a stakeholder roundtable regarding an overhaul of Article 30 of the Public Health Law.

During the meeting, we explained to the Governor's office as well as other participants, the importance of municipal ambulance services.