



Albany Update

Volume 5 June 6, 2005

The End is in Sight...

The end of the 2005 Legislative session is quickly approaching with June 23rd as the last scheduled day of session. Most observers believe that the Legislature will conclude their business for the year no later than July 4th, if it is necessary to continue beyond June 23rd.

There remain few issues that would impede a late June recess. One such issue, the public battle over funding for the Jets stadium, is expected to be concluded over the next few weeks. The second issue that could impact the end of session revolves around the ongoing court challenge to the conversion of Empire Blue Cross from a not-for-profit entity to a for-profit insurer. The New York State Court of Appeals heard oral argument on the case in early May, and it is possible that a decision will come down during June. It remains possible that the Court of Appeals could issue a decision that would eliminate the conversion of Empire as a source of funds for the Health Care Reform Act (HCRA). The loss of billions in dollars in funding for health care programs and many state programs would create a funding crisis that would have to be promptly addressed.

On the other hand, the Court could affirm the Empire conversion and allow the Legislature to proceed with the conversion of HIP. The Legislature and Governor would have to agree on the use of any funds made available by HIP conversion. In his SFY 2005-2006 Budget Proposal, Governor Pataki has proposed that \$1.2 billion from the HIP conversion be used to keep the HCRA fund solvent.

FUNDRAISERS

Monday, June 6th

ROBIN SCHIMMINGER [D]
Chair—Economic Development
Albany, \$400

ERIC SCHNEIDERMAN [D]
Deputy Minority Leader
NYC, \$250

Tuesday, June 7th

Assembly Republican Conference
Albany, \$500

Assem. RICHARD GOTTFRIED [D]
Chair—Health
Albany, \$300

Wednesday, June 8th

Democratic Senate Campaign Comm.
Albany, \$350

Thursday, June 9th

Assemblymember Clarence Norman [D]
Deputy Speaker of the Assembly
Brooklyn, \$125

Friday, June 10th

Assem RICHARD GOTTFIRED [D]
Chair—Health
NYC, \$350