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NEWS RELEASE
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NEWS

Senate Roll Call Votes to be posted on website for public access !

Senate Republicans called it “*a victory for Delaware citizens and transparency in government*” when the Senate Majority Leader announced today during Senate Session that complete Senate Roll Call votes will be posted on the official State Senate website for public access and information.

This is one reform of a “5-point plan for more open and accountable government” that Senate Republicans have pursued for several years.

Republican Leader Senator Charlie Copeland (R-West Farms) said “This is one small common-sense step toward transparency in government. It is long overdue, but it is a hopeful sign the Senate Majority is finally focusing on the need for a more open and citizen-friendly process.”

Senate Republican Whip Liane Sorenson (R-Hockessin) has asked for this change for the past five years on behalf of constituents who did not understand why Senate Roll Call votes were not available online to the public when that information was readily available from the House of Representatives. Senator Sorenson said “This is progress, and we applaud the action.”

Senator Steve Amick (R-Newark) has the longest record of advocating open government reform in the Senate, and is the Sponsor of SR 13 to rewrite the Senate Rules for greater public input, to abolish the “desk-drawer veto”, and to ensure that every bill gets a fair hearing in timely fashion. Senator Amick said “Publishing Roll Calls is a good first step and gives hope that the Senate may be coming around to address the more important elements of our reform plan in the public interest.”

Senate Republicans have unanimously and consistently put forward a *5-point plan* for more open and accountable Senate operations. The plan is:

**Senate Republicans' 5-point plan for more open
and accountable government:**

- Pass legislation under FOIA (Freedom of Information Act) to define the General Assembly and all its standing and ad hoc committees as “public bodies”.
- Change Senate Rules to do away with the power of a Senate Committee chair to single-handedly kill legislation by preventing public debate (“desk drawer veto”).
- Change Senate Rules to create a deliberative process that guarantees legislation will get a public hearing in committee within a reasonable time frame.
- Post Senate Roll Call votes on the General Assembly website giving the public access to an accounting of individual votes by all Senators.
***accomplished 4/8/08**
- Close loopholes to avoid the potential and appearance of conflict inherent in holding dual roles in government, including a prohibition on paid registered lobbyists holding office on state Authorities, Boards, Commissions and statutory Committees.

Senate Roll Call Votes will be available on the Senate website @ legis.delaware.gov (select “Bill Tracking” on the left.)

Roll Calls on legislation for the current 144th General Assembly will be available and Senate votes will be posted the day after Senate action for the future.

The Republican Senators & their Districts are: Senators Charlie Copeland (4th), Cathy Cloutier (5th), Liane Sorenson (6th), Steve Amick (10th), Dori Connor (12th), Colin Bonini (16th), John Still (17th) and Gary Simpson (18th).

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