

# Did Pataki, GOP Miss Chance To Get Hevesi Out?

There's been a lot of talk among Republican leaders about removing New York State Comptroller Alan Hevesi from office. It would seem, however, that they don't have the votes to do it, even if they get the call from Governor George Pataki to set up the rules to bring him to trial.

According to what we've read in several stories since the removal talk started, it would take a two-thirds vote of the 62-member body to pass an impeachment resolution after a trial.

Two-thirds of 62 comes out to 42 votes. But the GOP has only 35 votes and the Democrats 27, leaving the Republicans seven votes short of the 42 votes required.



**MARSHALL SECURES FUNDS FOR WOMEN AT WORK:** Queens Borough President Helen Marshall presented symbolic check, Tuesday, October 31, for \$35,000 to the Women at Work program at Queens College. On hand to accept check at Borough Hall are (l-r): Carmella Marrone, executive director of Women at Work program; College President James Muyskens, and Sue Henderson, Vice President for Institutional Advancement. The Women at Work program assists women with little work experience for a multitude of reasons to become highly marketable employees.

We're assuming here that Majority Leader Joseph Bruno will not be able to get the seven votes he needs from the Democratic side, unless plans are a foot to amend the rules before a Hevesi trial.

Perhaps this is why Pataki hasn't rushed to ask Bruno to take on the embattled Hevesi. In fact, Pataki said last week that Hevesi's removal from office "may well be something that doesn't happen over the course of the balance of the year." By that time, Pataki's term will have ended and he'll be out of office, succeeded presumably by Eliot Spitzer.

If Hevesi were in fact re-elected yesterday, the ball would then be in Spitzer's court—and surely the Democrat-controlled Assembly would have a say.

At this point, if Hevesi decided to remain in office to serve out his second term, would the Democrats take the initia-

tive to remove one of their own from an elected post? It's hard to say.

Spitzer might like to see Hevesi go, but Hevesi got along pretty well with Silver when he was an Assemblymember representing Forest Hills. For several years, Hevesi served as Deputy Majority Leader under Silver, indicating they worked together on the majority team. Some interesting things could happen in this situation.

Election returns were not final when the *Gazette* went to press last night. At this point, Hevesi's fate—at the hands of both the voters and the state legislature is uncertain.

**HEARINGS ON JUDGESHIP SELECTIONS:** Assembly Speaker Sheldon Silver has announced that the Assembly Judiciary Committee will hold a series of statewide public hearings on how

state Supreme Court Justices are nominated for election.

The announcement comes in response to a recent federal court decision which invalidated much of the state nominating system, ruling the system violated the First Amendment of the United States Constitution. The ruling said that until the current system is modified by the state legislature, Supreme Court justices would be subject to nomination through direct primary elections.

Under the present system, judges are nominated at judicial conventions by delegates elected after being nominated by county party organizations. There is rarely any opposition to these candidates.

The first of the Assembly committee hearings will be held next Wednesday, November 15 at 10:30 a.m. at the New York County Lawyers Association, 14

Vesey St., Manhattan. The hearings are open to the public.

Silver said the hearings would give the Assembly the ability to review a wide range of approaches thoroughly that could help the legislature find ways in establishing a judicial nominating system that is fair, comprehensive and effectively designed to ensure individuals who are placed on the court are free of bias and capable of rendering just decisions.

Besides primaries, there appears to be support for independent judicial screening panels made up of attorneys.

**BACK STATUTE OF LIMITATIONS EXTENSION:** Assemblymembers Margaret Markey (D-Maspeth) has announced that nine district attorneys in New York state, including Queens District Attorney Richard Brown, support her bill to extend the statute of limitations for sexual abuse against minors.

The present statute of limitations only allows a certain number of years during which a criminal or civil case can be prosecuted.

Under Markey's bill, criminal and civil statutes of limitations would be extended for five years for cases of sexual abuse against minors and would give victims until age 28 to bring charges or a suit against their attackers.

Markey has made her bill a top priority in the past two legislative sessions. She considers the district attorney support "a benchmark of how important this legislation is to protect our citizens".

**GALLAGHER MAN OF THE YEAR:** The Middle Village Chamber of Commerce recently named Councilmember Dennis Gallagher (R-C, Middle Village) its Man of the Year for his "tireless work in this community".

Chamber of Commerce President Tania Broschart added that Gallagher "has devoted time and energy towards the betterment of his district, and for that he deserves to be named our Man of the Year."

## GIOIA BLASTS PERVS IN PROJECTS:

Alarmed over a press report that 3,000 highest risk sex offenders and predators are living illegally in city public housing projects, 15 of them in Queens, Councilmember Eric Gioia (D-Long Island City) called for closer scrutiny of the perverts by the Police Department

Gioia said the Police Department provides information every six months about how many sex offenders are living in the projects illegally, but that is not good enough.

"It should be done every single month, if not every single week," Gioia said. He also complained that the police and the city Housing Authority were not enforcing a federal law that permits the removal of sex offenders from the projects.

Gioia was upset about the report and the way authorities are dealing with the problem because a registered sex offender allegedly tried to rape an elderly woman in the Ravenswood Houses in Long Island City in Gioia's district.

Gioia said he had confirmed the press report findings independently and plans to hold council hearings on the problem sometime soon.



**Gioia, foreground, joined by Pastor Mitchell G. Taylor, chairman of the East River Development Alliance.**