

THE DAILY GAZETTE

Failure to enact tort reform costs billions

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Re July 4 editorial ["Big money follows the powerful"]: Kudos to the Daily Gazette editorial team for exposing the potential corruption behind Speaker Sheldon Silver's questionable salary from Weitz & Luxenberg. While Speaker Silver is undoubtedly the major player preventing common-sense reforms to our civil justice system, it is not costing New Yorkers \$100 million annually. In fact, the tab is running much higher.

The Institute for Legal Reform estimates that the state of New York could save up to \$4.3 billion in tort costs and create between 74,000 and 201,000 new jobs by improving its legal environment. And according to a study by the Rockefeller Institute at the University at Albany, our state's failure to reform the "Scaffold Law" alone is costing taxpayers \$785 million in public costs every year.

Gov. Cuomo was recently quoted saying that "the trial lawyers are the single-most powerful force in Albany," and that they were the special interest preventing real reform.

We urge the governor to take on the trial lawyers and fight for real reform to our legal system. New York has no future as the lawsuit capital of the world.

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