

January 28, 2015



# Lawsuit Reform Alliance of New York

Justice. Fairness. Common Sense.

---

## **Statement from Lawsuit Reform Alliance of New York Executive Director Tom Stebbins Regarding the Imminent Departure of Sheldon Silver**

“News that Sheldon Silver will soon be replaced as Speaker of the Assembly marks the beginning of a new era in which New Yorkers can finally hope see to justice, fairness, and common sense return to our legal system. For over a decade, Sheldon Silver served on the payroll of a personal injury law firm, and for over a decade New Yorkers suffered under the influence of the trial lawyer special interests.

After over 20 years of Silver’s tenure, we are left with a state ravaged by lawsuits and litigation. Our doctors and hospitals pay the highest liability insurance rates in the country, by a wide margin. Our contractors are unable to even find insurance, and when they do, rates are several times higher than those of their competitors in other states. Companies in the #1 ‘Judicial Hellhole’ that is the NYC Asbestos Litigation court face judgments that are 250% higher than the national average. Under Silver’s watch, the lawsuit industry has thrived while businesses have fled or crumbled under the burden of our imbalanced legal system.

We are all paying for Mr. Silver’s actions. Taxpayers are on the hook for well over a billion dollars a year in lawsuits and litigation. New York City spends more on lawsuits than on parks, libraries and aging combined. In just one year, the NYC School Construction Authority paid over \$215m – the equivalent of 2-3 brand new schools - in additional insurance due to the outrageous Scaffold Law that Mr. Silver held in place for years while on the payroll of the trial lawyers who profit from it. Meanwhile, our kids go to school in trailers.

Today is a new day in Albany. We ask our elected officials to take on long overdue legal reforms, including Scaffold Law reform, transparency in asbestos litigation, stronger rules for experts and evidence in the courtroom, judgment interest rates in line with market rates, and fair share liability.

New York has been ‘Sue York’ for too long. We have no future as the lawsuit capital of the world. Today marks the beginning of a new era of justice, fairness, and common sense.”

*-Tom Stebbins, Executive Director, Lawsuit Reform Alliance of New York*

**Contact: Phoebe Stonbely | [PStonbely@lrany.org](mailto:PStonbely@lrany.org) | 518.512.5265**

###

*The Lawsuit Reform Alliance of New York (LRANY) is a nonpartisan not-for-profit association of businesses, professionals, healthcare providers, membership organizations, taxpayers, and concerned citizens committed to changing New York’s legal system to help create jobs and energize our economy.*