

# The Post-Standard

**The Post-Standard (Syracuse) - November 8, 2006**

**With Elections Over, Job One is Reforming Albany**

To the Editor:

The Brennan Center for Justice at New York University's School of Law released its report titled "Unfinished Business: NYS Legislative Reform 2006 Update)." Unfinished business pleads for hearing a reform moment because the process is still broken.

The update stresses these four recommendations:

- 1) Strengthen the committee process by creating mechanisms for rank-and-file members to force hearings and vote on bills.
- 2) End leadership control over bills getting to the floor by creating a mechanism for rank-and-file members to force floor votes.
- 3) Institutionalize conference committees and,
- 4) Codify fair, objective criteria for allotting resources and staff to members and committees.

Without the approval of the leadership, it is currently next to impossible for bills to reach the chamber floor for a vote. Committee chairpersons set the calendar agenda for bills brought up in committee.

Committee members have no control of the agenda and this should be changed. Bills should be deliberated in committee by its members before referred to another committee or committed to the house floor.

Equal debate at the committee level on bill particulars would open up the legislative process. New Yorkers deserve further Albany reform.

Kevin Bamerick  
Baldwinsville