

8124

2009-2010 Regular Sessions

I N   A S S E M B L Y

May 5, 2009

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Introduced by M. of A. KAVANAGH -- read once and referred to the Committee on Governmental Operations

AN ACT to amend the public officers law, in relation to the use of state aircraft by certain state officials, officers and employees

THE PEOPLE OF THE STATE OF NEW YORK, REPRESENTED IN SENATE AND ASSEMBLY, DO ENACT AS FOLLOWS:

1     Section 1. Legislative findings and intent. It is the intention of  
2 this legislature that a clear-cut statutory policy be enacted that is  
3 both concise and forthright regarding usage of state aircraft. The  
4 legislature determines that state aircraft are paid for and owned by the  
5 taxpayers of the state, who are entitled to the assurance that such  
6 resources are being used for legitimate state governmental purposes. The  
7 use of state aircraft shall be reserved for trips that are legitimate  
8 state governmental purposes only, as defined in section 72-b of the  
9 public officers law, as trips which are predominantly for official state  
10 business. Any person or persons traveling on state aircraft for purposes  
11 other than official state business shall pay for any trip or any portion  
12 of a trip not exclusively for state business by paying a prorated share  
13 of a commercial air carrier rate.

14     S 2. The public officers law is amended by adding a new section 72-b  
15 to read as follows:

16     S 72-B. LIMITATION ON USE OF AIRCRAFT BY STATE OFFICIALS, OFFICERS AND  
17 EMPLOYEES. 1. THE AIRCRAFT OWNED, LEASED, OR OPERATED BY ANY STATE  
18 OFFICE, AGENCY, AUTHORITY, DEPARTMENT, OR BRANCH OF THE LEGISLATURE,  
19 SHALL BE AVAILABLE ONLY FOR OFFICIAL STATE BUSINESS. THE EXECUTIVE  
20 DEPARTMENT SHALL HAVE THE SOLE POWER TO APPROVE OR DENY REQUESTS FOR  
21 USE OF STATE AIRCRAFT FOR OFFICIAL STATE BUSINESS.

22     (A) FOR PURPOSES OF THIS SECTION THE TERM "OFFICIAL STATE BUSINESS"  
23 MEANS ANY ACTIVITY INVOLVING TRAVEL IN A STATE AIRCRAFT IF THE ACTIVITY  
24 IS REASONABLY REQUIRED, EXPECTED, OR APPROPRIATE, CONSIDERING THE  
25 NATURE OF THE PUBLIC OFFICIAL'S OR EMPLOYEE'S JOB RESPONSIBILITIES. THE

EXPLANATION--Matter in ITALICS (underscored) is new; matter in brackets  
[ ] is old law to be omitted.

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1 ACTIVITIES SHALL INCLUDE, BUT NOT BE LIMITED TO, ATTENDANCE AT OFFICIAL  
2 MEETINGS, PUBLIC HEARINGS, OR OTHER LEGITIMATE STATE BUSINESS.

3 (B) IF A PARTICULAR FLIGHT IS IN PART OFFICIAL BUSINESS AND PART  
4 PERSONAL BUSINESS, THE USE OF THE STATE AIRCRAFT SHALL NOT BE APPROVED  
5 UNLESS THE MAJORITY OF THE FLIGHT EXPENSES AND TIME ARE FOR OFFICIAL  
6 BUSINESS. ANY OFFICIAL REQUESTING SUCH FLIGHT SHALL FILE A REQUEST WITH  
7 THE EXECUTIVE DEPARTMENT WHICH SHALL DETAIL THE NATURE OF THE ACTIVITIES  
8 THEY INTEND TO UNDERTAKE ONCE THE TRAVEL IS APPROVED, AND IF PERSONAL  
9 BUSINESS IS INVOLVED IN ANY WAY, THEY MUST MAKE A REASONABLE ALLOCATION  
10 OF THE FLIGHT TIME BETWEEN OFFICIAL AND PERSONAL BUSINESS AT THE TIME OF  
11 SUCH REQUEST. AFTER SUCH TRAVEL IS COMPLETE AND IF ANY REALLOCATION OF  
12 OFFICIAL AND BUSINESS TIME IS NECESSARY TO CORRECT THE ORIGINAL REQUEST,  
13 SUCH OFFICIAL SHALL PAY WITH NON-STATE FUNDS TO THE APPROPRIATE STATE  
14 AGENCY THE CHARGE FOR THE PART OF THE FLIGHT THAT IS ALLOCABLE TO  
15 PERSONAL BUSINESS. THE RATE CHARGED SHALL BE CALCULATED BY SUCH AGENCY  
16 USING COSTS THAT WOULD BE CONSIDERED IN A RATE DEVELOPED BY A COMMERCIAL  
17 AIR CARRIER. IN ALL CASES, THE FLIGHT REQUEST FORM, INCLUDING THE  
18 DESCRIPTION OF ACTIVITIES AND THE BASIS FOR THE ALLOCATION AT THE TIME  
19 OF APPLICATION SHALL BE INDICATED ON THE AIRCRAFT REQUEST FORM AS WELL  
20 AS ANY SUBSEQUENT REALLOCATION SHALL BE KEPT IN THE ORDINARY COURSE OF  
21 BUSINESS BY THE EXECUTIVE DEPARTMENT.

22 2. THE FOLLOWING CRITERIA SHALL BE CONSIDERED BY THE EXECUTIVE DEPART-  
23 MENT IN DETERMINING APPROPRIATE USES OF STATE OWNED, LEASED, OR OPERATED  
24 AIRCRAFT:

25 (A) WHETHER THE USE OF THE AIRCRAFT IS IN FURTHERANCE OF STATE OFFI-  
26 CIAL OR EMPLOYEE JOB ASSIGNMENTS.

27 (B) WHETHER THE USE OF THE AIRCRAFT IS FOR TRANSPORTING AN EMPLOYEE,  
28 STATE OFFICIAL, OR OTHER PERSON AUTHORIZED BY THE AGENCY, AUTHORITY,  
29 DEPARTMENT OR LEGISLATIVE BRANCH FOR PURPOSES OF CONDUCTING OFFICIAL  
30 STATE BUSINESS OR FOR PURPOSES OF PERFORMING SERVICES FOR THE STATE.

31 (C) WHETHER THE STATE POLICE OR ANY OTHER LAW ENFORCEMENT OFFICE HAS  
32 DETERMINED THAT SECURITY OR TRANSPORTATION VIA AIRCRAFT IS NECESSARY.

33 (D) WHETHER AN EMERGENCY EXISTS REQUIRING THE USE OF THE AIRCRAFT FOR  
34 THE PROTECTION OF LIFE OR PROPERTY.

35 3. A PERSON WHO IS NOT OTHERWISE AUTHORIZED IN THIS SECTION MAY ACCOM-  
36 PANY THE GOVERNOR, THE LIEUTENANT GOVERNOR, THE TEMPORARY PRESIDENT OF  
37 THE SENATE, THE SPEAKER OF THE ASSEMBLY, THE MINORITY LEADER OF THE  
38 SENATE, THE MINORITY LEADER OF THE ASSEMBLY OR THE CHIEF JUDGE OF THE  
39 COURT OF APPEALS WHEN SUCH OFFICIAL IS TRAVELING ON STATE AIRCRAFT FOR  
40 OFFICIAL STATE BUSINESS AND THE AIRCRAFT IS TRAVELING WITH SEATS AVAIL-  
41 ABLE. WHEN THE PERSON ACCOMPANYING SUCH OFFICIAL IS NOT TRAVELING ON  
42 OFFICIAL STATE BUSINESS AS PROVIDED IN THIS SECTION, THE TRANSPORTATION  
43 CHARGE SHALL BE A PRORATED SHARE OF A COMMERCIAL AIR CARRIER RATE. THE  
44 SPOUSE, DOMESTIC PARTNER OR IMMEDIATE FAMILY MEMBERS OF ANY OFFICIAL  
45 SPECIFIED IN THIS SECTION MAY, WITH PAYMENT OF TRANSPORTATION CHARGES,  
46 ACCOMPANY THE OFFICIAL WHEN SUCH OFFICIAL IS TRAVELING FOR OFFICIAL  
47 STATE BUSINESS AND THE AIRCRAFT HAS SEATS AVAILABLE.

48 4. THE STATE COMPTROLLER SHALL ANNUALLY AUDIT THE ASSIGNMENT AND USE  
49 OF STATE AIRCRAFT, AND SHALL HAVE ACCESS TO ALL DOCUMENTATION RELATING  
50 TO SUCH ASSIGNMENT AND USE. EACH YEAR THE STATE COMPTROLLER SHALL ISSUE  
51 A REPORT SUMMARIZING THE ANNUAL AUDIT OF STATE AIRCRAFT, A COPY OF WHICH  
52 SHALL BE POSTED TO THE OFFICIAL WEBSITE OF THE DEPARTMENT OF AUDIT AND  
53 CONTROL.

54 S 3. This act shall take effect immediately.