

ALBANY

POWER

100 LIST

“Being powerful is like being a lady,” mused the late Prime Minister Margaret Thatcher. “If you have to tell people you are, you aren’t.”

In Albany, as in every political arena, bluster is often mistaken for true power. Of course, even the perception that one has influence can yield genuine authority, but more often that not, those with true power in government are not the grandstanders but those who work dutifully, quietly and shrewdly behind the scenes to achieve their aims.

With this ranking of the 100 most powerful players in Albany, we have aimed to pull back the curtain on who really has the clout to get things done in the Capitol. Through off-the-record discussions with a number of the most respected insiders in state politics, the insights of our readers and a series of online polls, we have tried our utmost to construct a list that credibly reveals the politicians, staffers, advisors, lobbyists, advocates, consultants, business bigwigs, members of the media and labor leaders who really wield power in New York.

In making our selections, we have sought to insulate our process from any preconceived notions or considerations beyond this exercise’s only objective: accuracy. We have attempted not to be awed by titles or egos, and instead to make a clearheaded evaluation of a person’s power not on paper but in practice.

Some may be surprised by how comparatively few elected officials are on this list. Others may be angered by the glaring lack of diversity among our selectees, and the paucity of women, particularly at the highest rungs of this ranking. These observations cannot be disputed. We have made

our choices based upon what we believed to be a genuine reflection of Albany—even while being disheartened by the image cast.

As our savvy readers can surely appreciate, the challenges in compiling a list such as this one are daunting and many. One particularly noteworthy difficulty is the shifting sands of power amid the current dynamics at play in state government. Several of the insiders we consulted pointed out that more so than ever, victories in Albany are achieved by coalitions, not individuals, and as such it is problematic to determine who deserves credit for what.

All we can say in response is that we have done our best to cut through the noise. We fully acknowledge that the following list is subjective; in no way do we assert its infallibility. On the contrary, we hope that it provokes discussion and that, through the collective expertise of its defenders and critics, we all get a clearer understanding of our government and its internal workings.

We also grant that these rankings represent only a snapshot of this current moment in state history. Time and again we have learned all too well that those who are riding high in Albany right now could already be in line for a precipitous downfall tomorrow. Our intention has not been to prognosticate but to capture the present.

If by the time you are reading this list, one or more of its members are under arrest or shattered by allegations, we will not be surprised. All we can promise is that when we compile it again next year it will be updated to reflect all of the wild twists and turns that are certain to occur between now and then.

100. ROBERT DUFFY



LIEUTENANT GOVERNOR

The former mayor of Rochester is in a largely symbolic role now, standing in for the governor at ribbon-cutting ceremonies and serving as Cuomo's personal cheerleader. But he could be the next

David Paterson. You never know.

99. DAVID GRANDEAU

ETHICS COMPLIANCE CONSULTANT, DAVID GRANDEAU & ASSOCIATES; BLOGGER



The ethics gadfly has been a consistent thorn in the side of the governor and the Legislature. But amid the ongoing string of public corruption scandals in Albany, the influential blogger's tough love has come across as prescient and given him ample opportunity to claim, "I told you so."

98. BILL MAHONEY



LEGISLATIVE RESEARCH COORDINATOR, NEW YORK PUBLIC INTEREST RESEARCH GROUP

Nobody digs into the numbers like Bill Mahoney. By whipping up stunning statistics faster than anyone, he has found his niche in influencing the way that good-government issues are framed in the media and in policy discussions. Mahoney proves that one can be a wonk and still have a real-world impact.

97. JOHN CORDO

PRINCIPAL, CORDO & COMPANY

The influential lobbyist was a key player in Genting's successful bid to



develop the Resorts World New York casino in Queens and in securing a living wage for home care workers. Cordo cut his teeth as special counsel to the state Senate majority, where he learned how to deliver for a wide range of clients spanning business and labor.

96. RICHARD RAVITCH



FORMER LIEUTENANT GOVERNOR

Ravitch is hands-down the expert when it comes to sorting out government fiscal crises. The former lieutenant governor has been a savior of

New York before—he brought the MTA back from the brink in the 1970s and imbued the Paterson administration with some credibility. He could play a similar role for cash-strapped municipalities in the near future.

95. RICHARD RUNES

LOBBYIST

Richard Runes is a strategist and consultant for the real estate and publishing interests in New York, but he's under the radar and likes it that way. His knowledge and roots in Albany are deeper than almost anyone around, and he's so connected that he can keep his number unlisted and still do quite well.



94. MICAH LASHER



ATTORNEY GENERAL'S CHIEF OF STAFF

Mayor Bloomberg's former lobbyist in Albany recently took over as the attorney general's chief of staff. Joining the progressive AG is a shift for Lasher, whose last job was as one of the leading advocates for the charter school movement in New York, but he is a formidable political strategist with the chops to build Schneiderman's re-election campaign and to lay the groundwork for his future aspirations.

93. BILLY EASTON

EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR, ALLIANCE FOR QUALITY EDUCATION OF NEW YORK



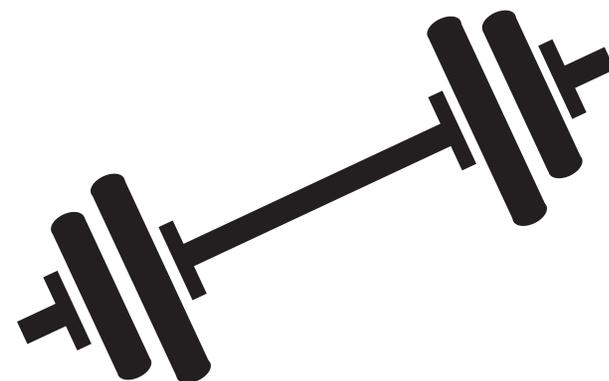
Easton has shown himself to be one of the most effective advocates in Albany, pushing successfully for an increase in school aid—the principal goal of his organization—and moving the ball down the field with key initiatives like the expansion of prekindergarten education.

92. ALFONSE D'AMATO



FORMER U.S. SENATOR; FOUNDER & MANAGING DIRECTOR, PARK STRATEGIES

Those who forget that D'Amato's voice still matters in New York politics do so at their peril. With a long relationship with virtually every power player in the state, the former senator is still a key figure in New York politics as a consultant, commentator and consigliere.



91. TONIO BURGOS

FOUNDER AND CEO, TONIO BURGOS AND ASSOCIATES



Burgos has been roaming the halls of the state Capitol as a lobbyist since Mario Cuomo's administration, and he still knows his way around. Burgos and Associates may not haul in as much money as some of Albany's other top lobbying firms, but its CEO has been an enthusiastic fundraiser and ally to the governor.

90. MICHAEL AVELLA

**PARTNER,
MEARA AVELLA
DICKINSON**

Along with his partner Brian Meara, Avella is one of the most influential lobbyists in Albany. A former chief counsel to two Senate majority leaders, Joe Bruno and Dean Skelos, Avella also has deep connections on both sides of the aisle.



Association.



86. MICHAEL MCKEON

**PARTNER,
MERCURY PUBLIC
AFFAIRS**



Mercury is one of the Capitol's most important public strategy firms, and McKeon isn't just a partner there—he was communications director under Gov. George Pataki and a

senior advisor to Rudy Giuliani. He was also the executive director of Republicans for Cuomo, and is one of the GOP operatives closest to the governor.

85. BRIAN SAMPSON

**EXECUTIVE
DIRECTOR,
UNSHACKLE
UPSTATE**

Sampson is one of the leading voices in advocating for upstate's business interests, which has been one of the governor's key areas of concern since taking office. But it's more than talk for the executive director of Unshackle Upstate, a media-savvy professional who is backed by a high-powered board.



84. DAN CANTOR

**EXECUTIVE
DIRECTOR,
WORKING
FAMILIES PARTY**



While his influence is greater in New York City, where the Working Families Party packs a bigger punch, as one of the major political arms of the state's labor unions, Cantor should not be overlooked as a powerhouse. However, his party's power could take a downturn if potential reforms to

the Wilson-Pakula law are enacted.

83. CAROL KELLERMAN

**CITIZENS BUDGET
COMMISSION
PRESIDENT**

Good-government groups are often scoffed at in Albany, but the Citizens Budget Commission's analyses have a real impact on policy in the Capitol. The accessible, well-researched reports from Kellerman and her team cut through the rhetoric with substance that lawmakers find difficult to ignore.



82. BRIAN KOLB

**ASSEMBLY
MINORITY
LEADER**



He may be head of the Assembly's lowly minority, but Kolb has shown himself to be a reasonable and adept politician who makes the most of his position. And as the leader of the perpetual

minority, he's the unique legislative leader with the latitude to speak candidly.

81. MICHAEL GORMLEY

**CAPITOL EDITOR,
THE ASSOCIATED
PRESS**

Gormley is consistently one of the best reporters in Albany. The trenchant, eye-opening articles from the Associated Press' man in the Capitol have a resonance across the state in papers big and small.



88. BRIAN COYNE

**DIRECTOR OF
LEGISLATIVE
OPERATIONS,
NEW YORK STATE
ASSEMBLY**

Coyne is a staffer whose influence could easily be overlooked by outsiders, but he is one of the most important forces on the floor of the Assembly. As former Assemblyman Paul Tokasz put it, Coyne is "key to the operation" for Shelly and the Democratic supermajority.



87. CASEY SEILER

**STATE EDITOR AND COLUMNIST, THE ALBANY
TIMES UNION; PRESIDENT, LEGISLATIVE
CORRESPONDENTS ASSOCIATION**

As the *Times Union's* state editor, Seiler directs the newspaper's in-depth political coverage. In addition to overseeing the paper of record for the state capital, where he has worked since 2000, the Buffalo native serves as president of the Legislative Correspondents



80. LOU ANN
CICCONO

**SECRETARY TO
THE SPEAKER**

For those who don't understand how the Legislature works, Ciccone's importance could be underestimated. But insiders

know that while she might not yet have the same influence as her predecessor, Dean Fuleihan, she is an integral member of the Speaker's team, with has a real impact in shaping policy.

79. KENNETH LOVETT



**ALBANY
BUREAU CHIEF,
NEW YORK
DAILY NEWS**

Ken Lovett's scoops and insights often beat even legislators to the punch. Lovett's knowledgeable, well-sourced

reporting has made him one of the most trusted and dependable figures in the Albany press corps.

78. JERRY JACOBS JR.

**PRINCIPAL,
DELAWARE
NORTH COMPANIES**



With the upstate tourism industry a primary focus of the Cuomo administration, Jacobs' role as one of the biggest business leaders in Western New York makes him a major force. A global leader in hospitality and food services, he is one of the key business leaders in Buffalo to whom Cuomo turns for advice.

77. KELLY CUMMINGS



**DIRECTOR OF
COMMUNICATIONS,
SENATE
REPUBLICANS**

The head of the Senate Republican Conference's press shop and the first line of defense for Dean Skelos, Cummings is more

than your typical government flack; before rising to her current position, she cut her teeth as director of policy development for Senate Republicans.

76. SUSAN ARBETTER

**HOST, THE CAPITOL PRESSROOM; WCNY
NEWS AND PUBLIC AFFAIRS DIRECTOR**

Arbetter's influence has grown since the governor defected to her show from Fred Dicker's, but having Cuomo as a regular guest isn't the only reason she



is on this list. Her comprehensive coverage, which delves into areas that are otherwise ignored, is having an impact on shaping the agenda in Albany.

75. SEAN ELDRIDGE

**INVESTOR AND
POLITICAL
ACTIVIST**



Regardless of whether he winds up in Congress, Eldridge is already playing a major role in state politics, having helped Cuomo pass marriage equality and now spearheading the push for campaign finance reform. Thanks in part to the shared resources of his husband, Chris Hughes, he's also got the ear of the governor, and has been an important fundraiser for Democratic candidates.

74. MICHAEL GIANARIS



**SENATE DEPUTY
MINORITY
LEADER**

Though relatively powerless in the minority of the Senate, Gianaris is considered by many political insiders to be the muscle behind

Sen. Andrea Stewart-

Cousins in the Democratic Conference. If he builds on his successes in 2012 as head of the Democratic Senate Campaign Committee in 2014, his power will only grow in Albany.

73. NIRAV SHAH

**COMMISSIONER,
NEW YORK
STATE DEPARTMENT
OF
HEALTH**



By being at the helm of the study exploring the health effects of hydraulic fracturing drilling, Shah currently plays an instrumental role in the

Meeting the Needs of Silicon Valley East



By Jack Friedman

The western part of Queens is undergoing an exciting economic transformation.

In just 20 years, Long Island City and its waterfront has evolved and grown from being dominated by older factories to now hosting a variety of cutting edge residential and technology work spaces. This evolution traces its roots back to the TV and film industry's decision to locate here several decades ago.

The high-tech entrepreneurs and fast growth companies that have been coming here for access to our business marketplace and talent pool is impressive. Queens has become an attractive tech sector destination, luring companies that have left Silicon Valley to grow here instead.

Part of the formula for that success is the creation of a welcoming environment for young professionals and their families to live and work in close proximity.

The coming Technion-Cornell Innovation Institute on Roosevelt Island, announced by Mayor Bloomberg last year, is expected to open in 2017 and we are preparing for its arrival, further boosting the science and technology center credibility of our corner of New York.

All of this has made the Queens Chamber of Commerce very mindful of what attracts technology-intensive firms. Aside from requiring a deep, well-educated talent pool and affordable spaces for staff to live and work, all of these companies are intensive electricity users.

In our own backyard we have several power producers meeting New York City's energy needs. Access to clean, affordable and reliable electricity – generated from natural gas, wind, solar, nuclear and hydro – is critical. Unfortunately New York businesses and consumers already pay among the highest rates in the nation, much in part due to the fact that one-third of the average utility bill is loaded with surcharges and fees – which are nothing more than back-door taxes.

While we want the power, it needs to come from New York-based sources. Imposing more costly fees and mandates on customers to handcuff us to a costly underground extension cord from Canada to Queens (for the sole purpose of importing Canadian-made power), takes away jobs from New Yorkers and hurts communities that host power generation facilities.

To maintain and build Western Queens as the tech incubator of the East Coast, we need to support and maintain existing domestic electricity production and not export our jobs, tax dollars and our future to Canada.

Jack Friedman is the Executive Director of the Queens Chamber of Commerce representing over 1,000 members representing almost 500,000 employees.

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ELECTRICITY ALLIANCE

The New York Affordable Reliable Electricity Alliance (New York AREA) is a diverse group of business, labor, environmental, and community leaders working together for clean, low-cost and reliable electricity solutions that foster prosperity and jobs for the Empire State.

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Cuomo administration; his report will be essential to determining whether the controversial natural gas extraction method goes forward. Shah is also a key player in the setup of the state's health care exchange and the governor's critical effort to curb Medicare and Medicaid costs.

72. PETER WARD



PRESIDENT, NEW YORK HOTEL AND MOTEL TRADES COUNCIL

Ward is a union veteran, having risen through the ranks over the last 30-plus years to the top post at the Hotel and Motel Trades

Council. Ward's union

might only have 30,000 members, but that hasn't stopped him from making it a significant force in electoral politics, particularly in New York City.

71. TOM PRECIOUS

ALBANY BUREAU CHIEF, THE BUFFALO NEWS



Albany's most respected reporter navigates the shadowy underworld of legislative deal-making in a way that makes his competitors envious. His deeply sourced copy on all manner of issues astounds his colleagues, and his articles are widely regarded as a must-read for anyone serious about following state politics.

70. BILL HAMMOND



COLUMNIST, NEW YORK DAILY NEWS

Cuomo cares greatly about what Hammond thinks about him, dispatching aides to his third floor desk before and after the longtime *Newser* writes his columns

to get the inside scoop on what's going to print. Hammond's voice is that of the upstate Everyman, perpetually fed up with the funny business of politics but never cynical about the importance of government in everyday life.

69. STANFORD LIPSEY

PUBLISHER EMERITUS, THE BUFFALO NEWS



The octogenarian publisher of *The Buffalo News* and Western New York titan still wields tremendous clout in the Capitol region and remains close to Sen. Charles Schumer, as well as to Warren Buffet, whose Berkshire Hathaway owns the *News*.

68. MELISSA DEROSA

GOVERNOR'S DIRECTOR OF COMMUNICATIONS



At 30, Cuomo's new communications director is one of the youngest members of his administration, but she's already a mainstay in Albany. A former top aide to Attorney General Schneiderman, with one of the most influential lobbyists in the state for a father, DeRosa also has strong ties to the Obama administration through her work as New York State director of Organizing for America.

67. HEATHER BRICCETTI



PRESIDENT & CEO, THE BUSINESS COUNCIL OF NEW YORK STATE

Few know the Legislature better than Briccetti, who served on both sides of the aisle as a staffer. She also happens to be one

of the foremost advocates for improving the business climate in the state, representing over 3,000 employers across New York.

66. JOSEPH MARTENS

COMMISSIONER, NEW YORK STATE DEPARTMENT OF ENVIRONMENTAL CONSERVATION



In a cabinet dominated by the governor, Martens is perhaps the most influential commissioner. Overseeing the state's approach to hydraulic fracturing, he is at the center of one of the most important issues in the

state—albeit one which the governor has delayed action on for months.

65. FRANK MACKAY



CHAIRMAN, INDEPENDENCE PARTY OF NEW YORK

Some Independence Party members may not realize they are registered with a party instead of simply being independent voters. Regardless,

MacKay's party remains a key piece of the puzzle for Republicans looking to get elected in New York State. Thanks to MacKay's alliance with the state Republican Party and the Real Estate Board of New York, MacKay still has some real juice in Albany.

64. SUSAN KENT

PRESIDENT, NEW YORK STATE PUBLIC EMPLOYEES FEDERATION



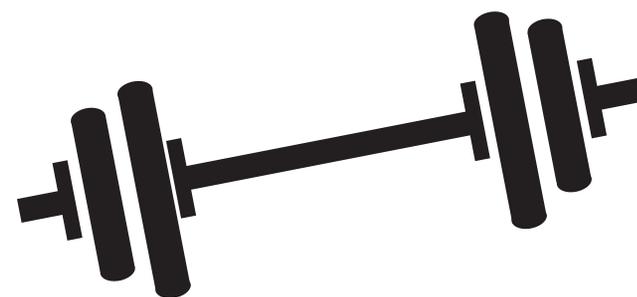
Kent represents 56,000 professional, scientific, and technical employees in one of the two largest public employee unions in the state. She also happens to be the highest ranking female labor leader in New York, and was elected as president last year in part by pledging to "get tough" in negotiations on behalf of her members.

63. EMILY GISKE



GOVERNMENT AFFAIRS SPECIALIST, BOLTON-ST. JOHNS

Together with Giorgio DeRosa, father of Melissa and No. 68 on this list, Giske leads Bolton-St-Johns' power team. With long,



influential ties to many legislators, her power is only going to increase if longtime ally Christine Quinn is elected mayor of New York City.

62. FREDRIC DICKER



COLUMNIST AND STATE EDITOR, NEW YORK POST; HOST, "LIVE FROM THE STATE CAPITOL"

The most outsize voice in the LCA, Dicker seems to savor the fear he instills in politicians who get on

his bad side. Though he and the governor appear to be on bad terms for the moment, Dicker seems to have a knack for bouncing back and finding a way to make himself an audible part of the discussion.

61. STEVEN SPINOLA

PRESIDENT, REAL ESTATE BOARD OF NEW YORK



Spinola has been REBNY's president since 1986, and for over a generation he has been one of the most influential behind-the-scenes players in the real estate world. From campaign contributions to the shaping of legislation, REBNY and its 12,000 members are a force to be reckoned with.

60. DIANE SAVINO



STATE SENATOR; INDEPENDENT DEMOCRATIC CONFERENCE LIAISON TO THE EXECUTIVE BRANCH

Don't let her modest title in the Independent Democratic Conference fool you. Savino

is one of the legislators closest to labor through her former employment as vice president for political action at AFSCME. One half of the Legislature's most famous power couple, Savino is the highest-profile member of the IDC after her beau, Jeff Klein.

59. MARIO CUOMO

FORMER GOVERNOR

A former governor who also happens to be the

father of the current governor, Mario acts as consigliere to his son, a trusted advisor he can count on, and one who understands the dynamics of the job better than anyone in state government.



STEPHANIE MINER



MAYOR OF SYRACUSE; CO-CHAIR, NEW YORK STATE DEMOCRATIC PARTY

Last year the first female mayor of Syracuse became a statewide figure when Gov. Andrew Cuomo made her co-chair of the Democratic Party. Since then she has maintained her independence, becoming the voice of the state's struggling municipalities in their push-back against Albany's policies.

57. PATRICK FOYE

EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR, PORT AUTHORITY OF NEW YORK AND NEW JERSEY

A former top aide to the governor, Foye is the head of one of downstate's biggest and most important state authorities. His mammoth portfolio includes maintaining much of the state's critical transportation infrastructure, and rebuilding the World Trade Center site.



56. DAVID SKORTON



PRESIDENT, CORNELL UNIVERSITY; CHAIR, NEW YORK RACING ASSOCIATION REORGANIZATION BOARD

He's the head of one of the state's most important universities, but

How to Become a National Energy Powerhouse



By Richard Roberts

There is a great deal of commotion about our national renewable energy economy and how the U.S. has become a leader in reducing greenhouse gas emissions. America's CO2 emissions have fallen some 13 percent since 2007.

It's not happening because of a great shift to wind and solar power sources, but rather because of the increasing cost of energy, the Great Recession, and technological improvement. Despite the talk about investing taxpayer dollars to go green, only seven percent of our nation's energy comes from renewable sources.

Changes in the past five years have caused CO2 emissions from power generation to drop more than 15 percent nationally. This can be a roadmap to maximizing our state's Marcellus and Utica Shale resources, potentially establishing every corner of New York as an epicenter for power generation and exportation.

Currently, New York is handcuffed with the nation's fourth highest price of power. Much of this is attributable to excessive state regulations and fees. If not for New York's current environmental friendly energy mix of: 44% natural gas; 27.1% nuclear; 19.9% hydroelectric; 4.6% coal; 0.4% petroleum and 4.1% other renewable sources, it might be even more costly to live and work here.

The U.S. Energy Department says power demand will grow in 2013 and 2014, as the economy improves. New York needs to meet its growth domestically by supporting and retaining all existing sources of in-state power generation. We need to stop talk of closing resources like Indian Point, which supplies 11% of the entire state of New York's power.

We must also turn away from proposals that intend to shut New York power plants and put our union workers in unemployment lines for the benefit of the Canadian economy. Instead of committing ratepayers here to pick up the \$811 million to \$2.2 billion tab for the Champlain-Hudson, Canada to Long Island City power line, our state leaders should focus on expanding in-state generating capacity for places like Long Island, which currently imports much of its power from the Pennsylvania, New Jersey, and Maryland (PJM) Grid and from Connecticut.

Instead of handcuffing taxpayers and ratepayers to even higher power costs, let's focus on making New York State a leader in clean, efficient power generation, enabling it to be a net exporter of energy and to create a thriving energy economy for our workforce and communities.

Richard Roberts is the Business Agent at Large for Steamfitters Local 638, Executive Board Member of New York State AFL-CIO, and Executive Board Member of the New York City and Long Island Building and Construction Trades Council.

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New York AREA's membership includes some of the state's most vital business, labor and community organizations including the New York State AFL-CIO, Business Council of New York State, Partnership for New York City, New York Building Congress, National Federation of Independent Business and many more.

WWW.AREA-ALLIANCE.ORG

he's also trusted by the governor to handle important tasks like getting NYRA organized. Cuomo's confidence in Skorton was further demonstrated when the governor tapped him to help develop the state's business community, garnering Skorton a mention in the State of the State address.

55. MICHAEL LONG



CHAIRMAN, CONSERVATIVE PARTY OF NEW YORK STATE

The Conservative Party, which took over Line C of the ballot in 2011, has fewer members than the Independence Party but a lot more influence.

A perennial thorn in the side of Republican Chair Ed Cox, Long has often bucked the GOP by backing conservative candidates even when doing so would fatally damage the Republican in the race. However, his authority could be undercut if the Wilson Pakula law is eliminated.

54. EVAN STAVISKY

PARTNER, THE PARKSIDE GROUP

As a partner in one of the more powerful political consulting firms in the state, Stavisky has been a driving force in getting Democrats elected to the state Senate.

While Harry Gianoulis works behind the scenes, Stavisky is the public face of his company. He inherited his political acumen from his two state senator parents.



53. MARIO CILENTO



PRESIDENT, NEW YORK STATE AFL-CIO

As president of a powerful coalition of unions that includes 2.5 million members, Cilento plays a big role in mobilizing his members behind key issues. Despite

being dealt a blow with Tier VI pension reform last year, Cilento made up for it by delivering on a minimum wage increase in this year's budget, albeit one phased in over three years.

52. BENJAMIN LAWSKY



STATE SUPER-INTENDENT OF FINANCIAL SERVICES

Lawsky's power comes less from his position as superintendent of Financial Services and more from his closeness with Cuomo, whom he served as his former

chief of staff. That being said, Lawsky has handled the merger of the insurance and banking departments under the DFS umbrella very smoothly, implementing regulations that may affect the financial services industry for years to come.

51. SURI KASIRER



PRESIDENT, KASIRER CONSULTING

Perhaps the most successful lobbyist in New York City and one of the most successful in Albany, Kasirer has come a long way from being a special assistant to former Gov. Mario Cuomo. She again

made her mark last year as a power broker by helping Cornell University win a tech campus on Roosevelt Island.

50. KARIM CAMARA

ASSEMBLYMAN; CHAIR, BLACK, PUERTO RICAN, HISPANIC AND ASIAN LEGISLATIVE CAUCUS

Camara has made himself the gateway between minority lawmakers and Cuomo's office, endearing himself to the governor by defending some of his policies to the Black, Puerto Rican, Hispanic and Asian Legislative Caucus. He is also one of the few Assembly members who has influence outside the Speaker's inner circle.



49. EDWARD COX

CHAIRMAN, NEW YORK STATE REPUBLICAN COMMITTEE

Barring a seismic shift in state politics, New York will always



be true-blue, but Cox soldiers on in his quest to make the state "purple." The recent scandal involving some of New York City's county Republican chairs didn't reflect well on his leadership, but he's still political royalty and an influential lawyer in his own right.

48. HAROLD ISELIN

ALBANY MANAGING SHAREHOLDER, GREENBERG TRAURIG

As the managing shareholder of one of the top lobbying firms in the state, Iselin has helped make sure that

Greenberg Traurig has the ear of many of New York's influential lawmakers. His tenure as assistant counsel to former Gov. Mario Cuomo undoubtedly gives him solid credibility with the current administration.



47. KEITH WRIGHT



ASSEMBLYMAN; CHAIR, HOUSING COMMITTEE; CO-CHAIR, NEW YORK STATE DEMOCRATIC PARTY

The Harlem assemblyman is one of the Legislature's most formidable political power-brokers, a fact that was reinforced by his appointment as co-chair of the New York State Democratic Party and his ascendancy to chair of the Assembly Housing Committee. Whenever Shelly Silver decides to bow out, Wright will be in the mix as his possible successor.

46. DANIEL DONOHUE

PRESIDENT, NEW YORK STATE CIVIL SERVICE EMPLOYEES ASSOCIATION

Donohue is the voice of state government employees, and he has not hesitated to shout down the governor or any state agency that doesn't act in the best interests of his membership. No battle is too big or small for Donohue, who has recently taken his bully pulpit to the Thruway Authority after the agency laid off 234 workers.



45. LIZ BENJAMIN



HOST, *CAPITAL TONIGHT*

The most highly visible journalist in Albany traded print for television and never looked back. A muckraker and proud of it, she's every bit as tough as anyone in the upper echelons of state

government. Benjamin is one of the few reporters whom the governor fears—and the only reporter who has had a Nixonian dossier compiled about her.

44. MIKE MULGREW

PRESIDENT, UNITED FEDERATION OF TEACHERS



Mulgrew forms a powerful one-two punch with NYSUT's Richard Iannuzzi, and always seems to find himself in the

middle of skirmishes on behalf of his members. While butting heads with Bloomberg over teacher evaluations did not reflect well on either of them, Mulgrew has come back swinging on mayoral control over the education system in what will be a true litmus test for his clout in the Capitol.

43. JOHN DEFRANCISCO



STATE SENATOR; CHAIR, FINANCE COMMITTEE

The Senate Finance chairman is the point person for all budgetary negotiations in the Senate. As one of Dean Skelos' closest friends he has the full trust of the majority

leader.

42. KENNETH RASKE

PRESIDENT, GREATER NEW YORK HOSPITAL ASSOCIATION

Raske plays a key role in shaping the state's health care delivery system. Hospitals will need his steady

hand as New York braces for the implementation of the Affordable Care Act and the enrollment of millions of uninsured individuals. Raske has also been a vocal opponent of for-profit investments in hospitals, despite the financially strained state hospital system.



41. RICHARD IANNUZZI



PRESIDENT, NEW YORK STATE UNITED TEACHERS

As head of the state teachers' union, Iannuzzi flexed some serious muscle in this past election, spending money all over the state

and helping secure several congressional and state Senate seats. He's now taking up the mantle as one of the leading opponents to the implementation of



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the Common Core curriculum, going toe-to-toe with Merryl Tisch and other state education leaders.

40. WILLIAM RUDIN



CHAIRMAN, ASSOCIATION FOR A BETTER NEW YORK; PRESIDENT, RUDIN MANAGEMENT COMPANY

Under Rudin's leadership, ABNY has become a powerful vehicle for real estate interests statewide.

He has also been out front in the rebuilding of lower Manhattan after the area was devastated during Superstorm Sandy. The governor named him as one of five people to oversee the Empire State Relief fund for homeowners displaced by the storm.

39. STEPHEN ROSS

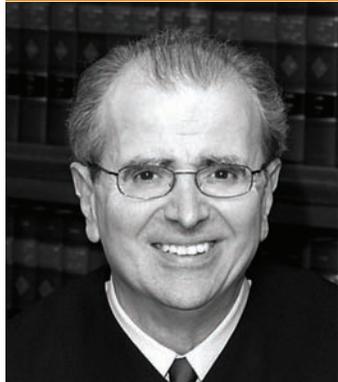
FOUNDER AND CHAIRMAN, THE RELATED COMPANIES



Real estate plays an outsize role in city and state politics, and this billionaire builder is one of the most influential people in the arena.

Ross announced last year that he was stepping down as Related's chief executive, but the ally and major donor to the governor is certain not to lose any of his clout.

38. JONATHAN LIPPMAN



CHIEF JUDGE OF THE STATE OF NEW YORK AND CHIEF JUDGE OF THE COURT OF APPEALS

As the state's chief judge, Lippman has always been a well-respected voice in Albany, and his influence is augmented

by his close friendship with Assembly Speaker Sheldon Silver. This year he's been vocal about overhauling the state's antiquated bail system, and he might just have the sway to do something about it.

37. JONATHAN SOROS

BILLIONAIRE INVESTOR

Soros didn't just lend his famous name to campaign finance reform—he put his money where his mouth

is. He continues to play a key role in changing campaign finance laws after backing several reform-minded Senate candidates in the last election cycle. He's back at work this session, using his resources to force the issue.



36. JAMES FEATHERSTONHAUGH



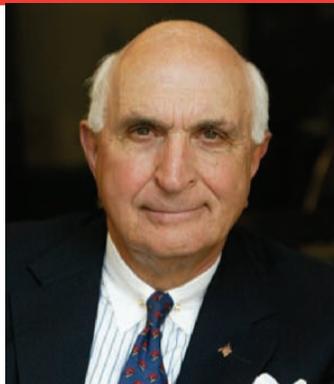
PRESIDENT, NEW YORK GAMING ASSOCIATION

With gaming as close to full-fledged legalization as it has ever been in the state, the industry's top player is more important than ever. And while he's a lobbyist

for the state's racetrack casinos, he has some skin in the game too as part owner of the Saratoga Casino and Raceway, a site well positioned to be one of the locations chosen for an upstate casino.

35. KENNETH LANGONE

BILLIONAIRE VENTURE CAPITALIST AND INVESTMENT BANKER



The billionaire venture capitalist and Home Depot founder is one of the Republican-leaning business leaders whose opinion Cuomo respects most. The governor turned to Langone to help convince Congress members to fork over federal funding for Superstorm Sandy relief in the northeast.

34. MERRYL TISCH



CHANCELLOR, NEW YORK STATE BOARD OF REGENTS

Her voice carries serious weight when it comes to education in the state, and being a part of the Tisch dynasty certainly doesn't hurt her cause, either.

Tisch has also been a driving force behind some high-profile policy initiatives such as making New York the first state to drop the GED test and implementing the

Common Core curriculum.

33. GARY LABARBERA



PRESIDENT, BUILDING AND CONSTRUCTION TRADES COUNCIL OF GREATER NEW YORK

He's the former president of the Central Labor Council, and his union represents the intersection of business, real estate and labor interests—essentially the

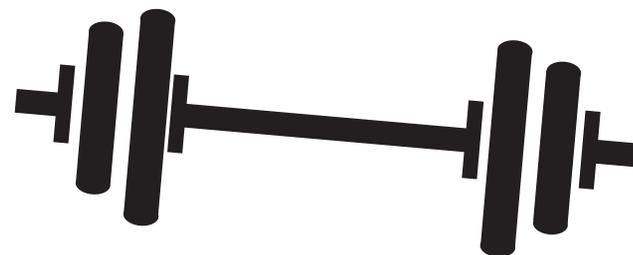
lifblood of the state. LaBarbera's influence was recognized by the governor with his appointment last year to the NY Works Task Force, which helps strategically allocate the state's capital investments.

32. PATRICIA LYNCH

PRESIDENT AND FOUNDER, PATRICIA LYNCH ASSOCIATES



A former Silver aide and one of the most influential lobbyists in the state, Lynch has bounced back from a 2010 campaign finance scandal involving the state comptroller's office. These days her staff is overseeing a bevy of legislative initiatives including the legalization of medicinal marijuana.



31. KENNETH SHAPIRO



PARTNER, WILSON ELSEER MOSKOWITZ EDELMAN & DICKER

Want to get something done in Albany but don't know how to navigate the weeds? Your first step should be to call Ken Shapiro,

a former chief counsel to three Speakers of the State Assembly, who is now one of the most sought-after lobbyists in the state.

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30. STEVEN COHEN



FORMER SECRETARY TO THE GOVERNOR

Cohen has two jobs—partner at Zuckerman Spaeder and top executive at one of Ron Perelman’s companies. But some would say he actually has a third: Cohen remains Andrew Cuomo’s most trusted confidant, even though he stepped down as secretary to the governor in 2011.

29. REX SMITH

EDITOR, THE ALBANY TIMES UNION



The Capitol region’s most influential editor holds the reins of Albany’s dynamic hometown team of political reporters, including Casey Seiler, James Odatto, Rick Karlin and Jimmy Vielkind. He also writes a highly regarded column on Saturdays that legislators read religiously.

28. MYLAN DENERSTEIN



COUNSEL TO THE GOVERNOR

The governor’s chief legal advisor and the highest ranking woman in the Cuomo administration, Denerstein is also its moral compass. It is not a reach to say that she is involved in every major deal and piece of legislation in the Capitol, while also examining bills and executive orders and assessing their potential effects.

27. JOSHUA VLASTO

GOVERNOR’S CHIEF OF STAFF

Cuomo’s hyperintelligent chief of staff once described his role as blocking the press corps’ desire to “sensationalize” a story in order to get page views on the Internet. Vlasto



scores as well as he can defend, deftly spinning the media on every topic of the day.

26. COL ALLAN



EDITOR IN CHIEF, THE NEW YORK POST

Fred Dicker is the public face of the *Post* in Albany, but Allan is the one who decides when Dicker’s insider-sourced exposés make it onto the front page. And despite its at times shameless coverage, Allan’s tabloid breaks an impressive amount of news in Albany.

25. CAROLYN RYAN

METRO EDITOR, THE NEW YORK TIMES



The *Times*’ stable of reporters provide stellar Albany coverage, from the Pulitzer Prize-winning stories about Eliot Spitzer’s prostitution scandal to a series about the gaps in the state’s safety net for the disabled. Behind it all is Carolyn Ryan, who has the enormously important role of deciding the direction of the *Times*’ coverage of New York politics.

24. JUDY RAPFOGEL



CHIEF OF STAFF TO THE ASSEMBLY SPEAKER

She is Silver’s chief of staff, but that title fails to encapsulate what she means to him. Rapfogel serves as his right hand and staunchest advocate. Moreover, her husband, William, is the CEO of one of the most powerful nonprofit groups in the state.

23. JENNIFER CUNNINGHAM

MANAGING DIRECTOR, SKD-KNICKERBOCKER

A juggernaut in Albany whose power touches every arena, Cunningham is one of



the most skilled and successful political strategists in the state. The former labor leader helped bring about marriage equality and remains a close confidant of both the governor and the attorney general.

22. ROBERT MEGNA

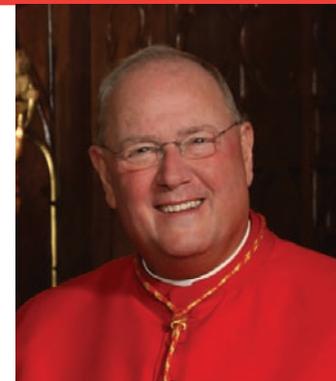


STATE BUDGET DIRECTOR

Power lies within the budget, and Megna is its master. A holdover from the Paterson era, Megna has an encyclopedic knowledge as a budget wonk, and his deft use of budget extenders helps get the governor what he wants in negotiations. His expert work may largely explain those three straight on-time budgets.

21. TIMOTHY DOLAN

CARDINAL; ARCHBISHOP OF NEW YORK



Catholicism continues to be the No. 1 faith for New Yorkers, with 7.3 million followers, including the governor, out of a total population of 19.3 million people. Dolan has a powerful voice not only in Albany—where he was an asset on efforts such as increasing the minimum wage and is now a tough opponent to the governor’s efforts to expand reproductive rights—but also internationally. He was floated as a possibility to be the next pope.



20. ROB SPEYER



CHAIR, REAL ESTATE BOARD OF NEW YORK; CO-CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICER OF TISHMAN SPEYER

The youngest chair in the Real Estate Board of New York’s history and president of real estate giant Tishman Speyer, the press-shy Speyer is one of New York’s most significant movers and shakers in a city full of them. He’s also a key supporter of the governor, and the founder and co-chair of the Committee to Save New York, which spent more money on lobbying in New York State than any other organization in 2011 and 2012.

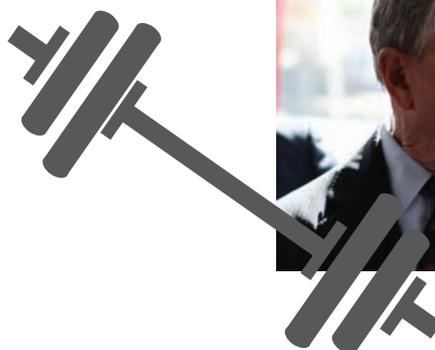
19. KIRSTEN GILLIBRAND

U.S. SENATOR

The subject of glowing profiles in several glossy magazines, Gillibrand is earning legitimate presidential buzz for 2016 thanks to her tough stances on same-sex marriage, gun control, federal aid for 9/11 workers and Superstorm Sandy relief. She may have to fend off the governor if Hillary doesn't run, a thought that Cuomo surely doesn't relish.



that Bloomberg isn't higher up on this list.



15. JOSEPH PERCOCO

EXECUTIVE DEPUTY SECRETARY, GOVERNOR'S OFFICE



Cuomo's former advance man is his most loyal aide and top enforcer, with unparalleled access to his boss. The third peg in Cuomo's

adviser triumvirate with Glaser and Schwartz, Percoco specializes in dealing with gubernatorial obstacles on matters better left behind-the-scenes.

14. JAMES YATES

COUNSEL TO THE ASSEMBLY SPEAKER



A former judge and counsel to former Speaker Mel Miller, Yates never leaves Shelly Silver's side when a bill or the budget is being hashed out. He not only drafts the Democrats' legislation but takes to the floor to whip up votes for it.

13. ROBERT MUJICA

CHIEF OF STAFF AND FINANCE SECRETARY, SENATE REPUBLICANS



Dean Skelos' most trusted advisor is the architect of the Senate's governing majority. The unflappable negotiator wears a lot of hats: secretary of the Senate Finance Committee, Skelos' chief of staff and Senate Republicans' sensei all rolled into one.

12. JOSEPH MORELLE

ASSEMBLY MAJORITY LEADER



He doesn't seek the spotlight, but he's become a favorite of the governor and Assembly members on both sides of the aisle. If Shelly ever calls it quits, Morelle would be the clear choice to be the next Speaker if he weren't from upstate New York. Chair of the Monroe County Democratic Party, he is a juggernaut in his area, even recently electing his son Joe Jr. to the county legislature.

11. ERIC SCHNEIDERMAN

ATTORNEY GENERAL



A hero among New York City progressives, Schneiderman has garnered national attention for his crusades against Medicaid fraud and his settlements with the financial industry.

While likely a future gubernatorial candidate, he has been oddly passive in taking on political corruption, and deferred to the governor on signature issues including ethics reform in a way that Cuomo and Spitzer never did.

10. THOMAS LIBOUS

SENATE DEPUTY MAJORITY LEADER



Upstate New York's most powerful legislator is also one of the shrewdest, and the governor's toughest sparring partner. He has sponsored Kendra's Law, fought for improved services for the disabled, and is pushing Cuomo to legalize hydrofracking.

9. PREET BHARARA

U.S. ATTORNEY FOR THE SOUTHERN DISTRICT



Bharara, who keeps racking up high profile convictions and is cleaning

18. ANDREA STEWART-COUSINS

SENATE MINORITY LEADER



The first woman in a leadership position in the Legislature's history has been a calming presence in a conference long beset with turmoil.

The governor listens to her, particularly on women's issues—a focal point of his State of the State address this year. She is in the minority right now, but power has a way of changing, like the weather in Albany, and she could soon accomplish another historic first.

17. KATHRYN WYLDE

PRESIDENT AND CEO, PARTNERSHIP FOR NEW YORK CITY



There's no one who embodies New York City's business interests more than Wylde, and as a result there are few legislators who won't take her call. The only smudge on her record this year was when she failed to prevent Cuomo from passing a high-tax bracket for top income earners in the budget.

16. MICHAEL BLOOMBERG

MAYOR OF THE CITY OF NEW YORK

He's got a testy relationship with the governor and didn't do himself any favors in Albany by wrangling with the UFT over teacher evaluations this year, but Bloomberg's clout as a businessman, mayor and media mogul still make him a significant player in the Capitol. It's only because the mayor is on his way out the door

up the culture of corruption like the protagonist in a Scorsese movie, may be the most feared man in New York politics since Rudy Giuliani. Who knows what other details will emerge from thousands of hours of taped conversations between ex-pol Nelson Castro and state legislators?

8. THOMAS DINAPOLI



STATE COMPTROLLER

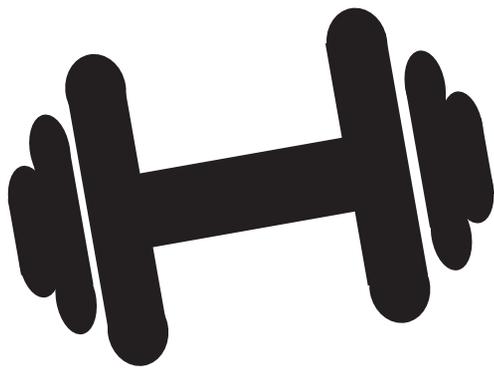
The comptroller cleaned up his office after his predecessor was hauled off to prison, and earned a steady series of victories on campaign funding disclosures. He may come across

as mild-mannered, but he has stood up to Cuomo on pension smoothing and other budgetary issues.

7. HOWARD GLASER

GOVERNOR'S DIRECTOR OF STATE OPERATIONS

As indispensable to Cuomo as anyone, Glaser coordinates dozens of agencies, oversees the response to emergencies, and manages 180,000 state employees while running the state's day-to-day affairs. And if a state worker speaks out of line, Glaser knows how to get out the knives.



6. LAWRENCE SCHWARTZ



SECRETARY TO THE GOVERNOR

Secretary to two consecutive governors, Schwartz provides crucial institutional memory to an office of young pragmatists, and is Cuomo's shrewdest negotiator. If you want to pass legislation or

get funding for your cause in the budget, sooner or later you're going to have to deal with Schwartz.

5. CHARLES SCHUMER



U.S. SENATOR

The sagacious senator has quietly become the White House's go-to negotiator, working with Republicans to achieve notable bipartisan victories in one of Washington's most polarizing eras. His office is also

New York's most successful farm team, claiming alumni scattered throughout our power list.

4. JEFFREY KLEIN



SENATE MAJORITY COALITION CO-LEADER

Klein, who earned a seat at the negotiating table by sharing power with Skelos, has made the alliance work—so far. Sen. Malcolm Smith's arrest embarrassed Klein's Independent

Democratic Conference, but Klein cut bait quickly, and remains one of Albany's most charmed power brokers.

3. DEAN SKELOS



SENATE MAJORITY COALITION CO-LEADER

Skelos has deftly maintained control of the Senate despite having fewer Republicans in the chamber than Democrats, due to a majority coalition he negotiated with state Sen. Jeff Klein. To date he has been able to win budget concessions for businesses and block some left-leaning legislation from coming to the Senate floor.

2. SHELDON SILVER

ASSEMBLY SPEAKER

Perhaps the most powerful Assembly Speaker ever, Silver, who has held the job since 1994, has become renowned for his ability to marshal votes and negotiate a budget on behalf of his members. This year he raised the minimum wage and brushed back a rumor that Cuomo was looking to oust him.



1. ANDREW CUOMO



GOVERNOR

It has been a generation since New York has had a governor this omnipotent. Little legislation of substance gets passed without his approval, many people fear him, and as one of America's most skilled politicians, he may find himself in the White House someday.