

New York State Senate: IDC Fact Sheet

What is the IDC?

- The Independent Democratic Conference (IDC) – led by Bronx Sen. Jeff Klein – is a group of NY State Senators who were elected to office as Democrats but align with Republicans
 - o IDC Members: Marisol Alcantara (Manhattan), Tony Avella (Queens), David Carlucci (Rockland), Jesse Hamilton (Brooklyn), Jeff Klein (Bronx), Jose Peralta (Queens), Diane Savino (Staten Island), David Valesky (Onondaga)

- In 2012, Democrats won a majority of seats in the State Senate, but the IDC broke away from the main Democratic conference to give Republicans control of the Senate
 - o Huffington Post: New York State Senate Slips to Republicans Via Coalition with Independent Democrats
 - http://www.huffingtonpost.com/2012/12/04/new-york-state-senate-coalition_n_2238324.html

- Democrats also held a majority of Senate seats after winning a Special Election in 2016, and once again after the 2016 election, but Republicans have remained in charge through their alliance with rogue Democrats
 - o Buffalo News: Breakaway Democrats decide to stick with GOP in New York State Senate
 - <https://buffalonews.com/2017/01/02/breakaway-democrats-decide-stick-gop-new-york-state-senate/>

“Party of Trump”: Who are the IDC’s Republican allies?

- The Senate Republicans whom the IDC has empowered are among Donald Trump’s earliest and most ardent supporters and his closest ideological allies in New York State
 - o NY Daily News: [Senate Leader] Flanagan signs GOP letter in support of Trump education pick
 - <http://www.nydailynews.com/news/politics/flanagan-signs-letter-supporting-trump-education-secretary-pick-article-1.2959251>

- The Senate Republican conference is 100% anti-choice and anti-LGBT, opposes the NY DREAM Act, opposes criminal justice reform, and opposes campaign finance reform, all while promoting anti-immigrant legislation that could have been written by Steve Bannon:
 - o NY Post: Senate proposes bill to prevent destruction of municipal ID records
 - <http://nypost.com/2017/01/29/senate-proposes-bill-to-prevent-destruction-of-municipal-id-records/>
 - o NY Daily News: NY Senate bill compels data collection on foreign-born college students
 - <http://www.nydailynews.com/news/politics/n-y-senate-bill-collect-data-foreign-born-college-students-article-1.2959107>

What does the IDC get out of its alliance with Republicans?

- Not real influence – corrupt former Senate Republican Leader Dean Skelos described his deal with Klein and the IDC (the same deal they have with current GOP Leader Flanagan) as follows in a wiretapped conversation:
 - o USA Today: "It's going to be co-coalition leader, which means nothing," Dean Skelos said. "I'm going to be president of the senate, I'm going to be majority leader, I'm going to control everything. I'm going to control who is on what committees, what legislation comes to the floor, the budget -- everything."
 - <http://www.usatoday.com/story/news/politics/blogs/vote-up/2015/11/19/i-am-going-to-control-everything-wiretap-reveals-skelos-strategy-on-klein-idc/76048310/>
- Instead, IDC members get personal perks and district-specific goodies while statewide progressive legislation lingers.
 - NPR: “Klein and the Independent Democrats will still get a larger share of resources allocated to Senators, like office space, staff budgets, and computers, than the rest of the Senate Democrats.”
 - <http://wrvo.org/post/state-senate-starts-2015-gop-fully-charge>
 - NY Post: State Senator switched parties because he needed a pay raise
 - <http://nypost.com/2017/01/29/state-senator-switched-parties-because-he-needed-a-pay-raise/>

IDC “Alternative Facts” vs. Reality

- Alternative Fact: The IDC led the charge on the “Fight for \$15”
- Reality: In 2013, the Republican/IDC coalition voted for a gradual minimum wage raise from \$7.25/hr to \$9.00/hr that experts and mainline Democrats criticized for not going far enough. In 2015, after the IDC lost any say over the legislative agenda, Governor Cuomo pushed through a minimum wage hike to \$15.00/hr that needed mainline Democratic Conference votes to pass
- Alternative Fact: The IDC can force Republicans to pass progressive legislation
- Reality: Senate Republicans have blocked the following legislation from passing in New York
 - o DREAM Act to provide tuition assistance to children of undocumented immigrants
 - o Women’s Equality Act to codify Roe v. Wade in New York law
 - o GENDA to protect LGBT New Yorkers from discrimination
 - o Voting Reform including early voting and automatic voter registration
 - o Criminal Justice Reform including “Raise the Age”
 - Campaign Finance Reform and Ethics Reform to clean up Albany corruption
 - New York Health Act: Single Payer in New York State

The Sad Truth

- Village Voice: Albany Will Stay Broken and the Growing Independent Democratic Conference is a Big Reason Why
 - o <http://www.villagevoice.com/news/albany-will-stay-broken-and-the-growing-independent-democratic-conference-is-a-big-reason-why-9612732>