



NEWS RELEASE

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TALE OF THE TAPE: NYPIRG 2015 LEGISLATIVE REVIEW

As part of NYPIRG's ongoing review of legislative activity, the following analysis examines the 2015 New York legislative session to date. This analysis does not analyze or draw conclusions on the substance of bills or the overall legislative output, since "productivity" is more complicated and subjective than simple numbers. It is up to New Yorkers to assess the Legislature's effectiveness and impact. In order to be informed, however, New Yorkers deserve information on the functioning of their Legislature and we hope that the following information will stimulate dialogue between lawmakers and their constituents.

Unless otherwise noted, the following information is based on data compiled by the Legislative Bill Drafting Commission. This data was obtained between June 17 and June 27, and subsequent revisions made to publicly-released voting results might not be reflected. Numbers are subject to revision in the event of a special or extraordinary session.

2015 marked a big increase in the number of bills passed by both houses.

As seen in **Chart 1**, 2015 was the highest number of bills passed compared to the previous six years. While the 2015 session saw a big hike in the number of bills that passed both houses, the overall historical trend has been one of decline. Since 1995, the four years that saw the fewest bills pass both houses are 2009, 2012, 2013 and 2014. When examining the number of two house bills passed over a longer period of time, **Chart 2** shows legislative actions, by gubernatorial administrations since 1920. The historical trend is quite clear: legislative agreements have declined over time.

Chart 1: Bills Passing Both Houses 1995-2015

Year	Passed Assembly Jan-July	Passed Senate Jan-July	Passed both Jan-July	Passed Assembly Full Year	Passed Senate Full Year	Passed both Full Year	Number of bills introduced in both houses during 2 year session
2015	1065 (as of 6/26)	1628 (as of 6/26)	718 (as of 6/26)	TBD	TBD	TBD	14302 (as of 6/26/15)
2014	1143	1460	658	1143	1460	658	15971
2013	1071	1408	650	1071	1408	650	
2012	1056	1256	571	1056	1256	571	15945
2011	999	1289	677	1001	1291	679	
2010	1196	1124	700	1210	1143	716	18079
2009	1242	640	554	1256	694	588	
2008	1641	1794	811	1645	1822	830	18294
2007	1531	1770	847	1538	1828	861	
2006	1961	1842	958	1965	1848	963	17770
2005	1628	1603	882	1630	1619	890	
2004	1702	1522	777	1793	1607	879	17214
2003	1403	1366	761	1408	1374	768	
2002	1654	1294	745	1654	1314	755	16892
2001	1283	1050	549	1394	1149	662	
2000	1537	1424	711	1537	1424	711	16995
1999	1470	1317	607	1586	1412	732	
1998	1547	1369	674	1563	1391	694	16106
1997	1132	1234	475	1469	1408	758	
1996	1580	1543	813	1585	1558	830	15670
1995	1362	1401	776	1362	1407	782	

Chart 2: Comparing Passage of Two House Bills During Gubernatorial Administrations 1920 through 2015¹

Governor	Average Two House Bills per Year
Miller	908
Smith 1923-1928	936.17
FDR	1047.25
Lehman	1214.1
Dewey	1189
Harriman	1289.25
Rockefeller	1356.2
Wilson	1348
Carey	1041.38
Cuomo, M.	941.75
Pataki	785.33
Spitzer	861
Paterson	711.33
Cuomo, A.	654.8

Messages of Necessity continue to be less frequent than in years past.

In the five years of Governor Cuomo’s tenure, an average of 12.8 bills have passed both houses per year with a message of necessity, compared to his immediate predecessors the Spitzer/Paterson Administration (41) and the Pataki Administration (89.2).

¹ Historic totals from 1920 through 1994 were obtained from the New York State Red Book.

Chart 3: Annual messages of necessity, 1995 through 2015

Year	Bills Passing With Either House with Message of Necessity
2015	10
2014	17
2013	3
2012	5
2011	29
2010	57
2009	43
2008	41
2007	23
2006	39
2005	34
2004	84
2003	58
2002	102
2001	80
2000	83
1999	118
1998	100
1997	109
1996	144
1995	119

Little change in the number of bills approved by the governor, but the trend is that vetoes are increasing.

As seen in **Chart 4** below, there has been little change in the number of bills approved by the governor and his actions track those of his most recent predecessors. However, there has been an increase in the number of bills vetoed by Governor Cuomo. Note the combined total of bills that have been approved or vetoed does not exactly match the total number of bills passing both houses. Due to the governor’s line-item power, many appropriation bills fall into both categories. Also, many of the bills passed are in the flurry of June, 2015 activity and the vast majority of those bills have not yet been acted upon by the governor.

Chart 4: Percentage of two-house bills approved or vetoed, 1995 through 2015

Year	Chaptered	Vetoed
2015	31	4
2014 ²	550	106
2013	558	87
2012	505	61
2011	610	68
2010	567	150
2009	507	79
2008	652	177
2007	691	164
2006	750	219
2005	770	119
2004	750	132
2003	755	69
2002	698	55
2001	591	70
2000	609	101
1999	657	70
1998	656	46
1997	686	69
1996	721	94
1995	694	83

Legislative activity by month

Legislative activity increases each month that lawmakers are in session, culminating with huge number of bills being approved in June. Note that March is the biggest month for campaign fundraisers.

Chart 5: Monthly legislative and campaign fundraising activity, session 2015

Month	Senate passage of bills	Assembly passage of bills	Fundraisers	Number of scheduled session days
January	20	0	11	7
February	35	21	29	6 ³
March	84	84	77	17
April	64	62	12	7
May	262	142	19	11
June	1186	765	22	10

² By way of comparison, at the end of last year’s legislative session, 41 bills had been approved and three had been vetoed.

³ February saw five additional legislative days for budget hearings, but were not listed as “session days.”

Constitutional Amendments

For the second year in a row, no constitutional amendments were approved.

Chart 6: Annual approvals of constitutional amendments, 2002 through 2015

Year	Constitutional Amendments Passing Both Houses
2015	0
2014	0
2013	8
2012	6
2011	2
2010	1
2009	2
2008	1
2007	5
2006	3
2005	3
2004	1
2003	2
2002	2

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