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Former MTA Chairman Richard Ravitch appointed Lt. Governor

ALBANY - In a live address, Gov. David Paterson named Richard Ravitch lieutenant governor, the move will help end the stalemate in the State Senate.

Ravitch has extensive experience in politics.

According to the New York Times, President Lyndon B. Johnson appointed him to the National Commission on Urban Problems.

In 1975, New York Governor Hugh Carey enlisted him to rescue the New York State Urban Development Corporation.

As Chair of the Metropolitan Transportation Authority, he also helped transform Manhattan's mass transit system from disarray during the early 1980's.

Republican Senator Dean Skelos quickly reacted to the appointment, saying the Governor was putting politics ahead of the welfare of New Yorkers.

Skelos also said the the GOP-led Coalition and Democratic Conference are close to a bi-partisan agreement to guide operation of the Senate.

"Now we have a new Senate reform Coalition that is ready to provide the leadership that Governor Paterson and the previous Senate Democrats failed to offer. We are ready to fulfill the promises of reform and accountability that were broken," Skelos said.

Is Paterson's move legal?

According to Attorney General Andrew Cuomo... no.

When Paterson first considered the idea, Cuomo sent out his interpretation of the State Constitution.

He said, "We understand the apparent political convenience of the proponents' theory due to the current Senate circumstances. In our view, however, it is not constitutional."

Skelos agreed and said the appointment is unnecessary.

The Senate battle has been going on for a month. The June 8th coup split the Chamber, 31-31, leaving no side with a majority.

Since then, no legislation has been passed.

Hoping to force them into action, the Governor kept the Senate in Albany, through the July 4th weekend and on Wednesday, stopped the Senators' pay and expense checks.

Paterson announced a media availability with Ravitch for 11:30 AM at the Capitol on Thursday.