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## The Week That Was

02-02-18

### 1. Aren't All Elections Special?

#### *Our Spin:*

There is no doubt that those involved in NYS politics will likely have their eyes on Westchester County this April. News broke this week that Governor Cuomo has finally settled on a date for the vacant seats in the State Legislature. However, in our opinion, the more things change, the more they stay the same. It is likely the two departing Democratic Senators will be replaced with two Democratic Senators. This leaves the mystery of the brokered deal to reunify the Democratic Conference to the fealty of Senator Felder. At least until November.

#### *The Story:*

In the next few days Governor Andrew Cuomo will call a special election for the 11 legislative vacancies in the Senate and Assembly for April 24, sources with knowledge of the plan said earlier this week. The special election is vital to the success of a deal that would unite Democrats in the state Senate, filling vacancies in two districts in the Bronx and Westchester County.

"I look forward to electing Democrats to both open seats and finally giving New York voters the functioning Senate Democratic Majority they have repeatedly voted into office, yet been denied," said Senate Democratic Leader Andrea Stewart-Cousins.

Under the agreement, the mainline Democratic conference in the Senate and Independent Democratic Conference would form a coalition, pending victories in those districts. "Luis Sepulveda, the Democratic nominee

for SD-32, is a smart, effective leader and I look forward to him joining us in the State Senate," Stewart-Cousins said.

A lot of the focus however will be on the Westchester County race, in what has been a district long sought by Republicans. It is expected to be one of the more costly special elections. Democratic Assemblywoman Shelley Mayer is running for the Westchester County seat, while Republicans Dan Schorr and Sarmad Khojasteh are vying for the GOP nomination.

Should Democrats win both seats, the party would have a numerical majority in the chamber. Democrats would still have to work to win over Brooklyn Democratic Senator Simcha Felder, a Brooklyn lawmaker who conferences with the Senate GOP and has said he would back whichever conferences offers the best arrangement for his constituents.

[NY Daily News](#)  
[State of Politics](#)

### 2. Crumbs or Real Dough \$

#### *Our Spin:*

Increasingly Nancy Pelosi seems to be wandering alone in the vast United States forest in search of a message spreading crumbs. Is Speaker Pelosi like Hansel and Gretel counting on the bread crumbs that she says were left behind to lead her safely back to the speakership? As many working Americans are beginning to experience the positive impacts of tax reform through reduced tax with holdings and bonuses, Pelosi continues to look for crumbs! Perhaps she should remember the hungry birds who ate the

crumbs and wiped out the trail home. Does anybody think Paul Ryan looks a little bird like?

*The Story:*

House Minority Leader Nancy Pelosi is being criticized by members of her own party for downplaying the benefits of tax reform. New York Rep. Joseph Crowley informed Pelosi that \$1,000 bonuses were not "chump change."

"I don't think \$1,000 is sort of chump change to somebody who's making \$40,000. What I do question is whether or not those bonuses were planned regardless of the passage of the tax bill," Crowley said.

Crowley wondered whether those employers had already planned to dole out bonuses, despite the tax reform package. But, it's quite the coincidence when dozens of other companies have suddenly invested massively in their workforces after the vote. Boeing, AT&T, Darden Restaurant Group, Apple, and Starbucks to name a few.

Yet, Pelosi continues to stick to her rhetoric. The employee bonuses are "crumbs" compared to the rewards large corporations and the 1 percent are getting, she said again Thursday. "I say crumbs, they mock me in ads for saying that," she said at TrumpTax Town Hall event in Massachusetts. "Compared to the banquet they give at the high end."

Since the Tax Cuts and Jobs Act passed in December, it has made a 21-point net positive swing among the American public. President Trump criticized Pelosi during his speech at the Republican retreat in West Virginia Thursday, comparing her "crumbs" comments to Hillary Clinton's infamous "deplorables" remark during the 2016 presidential election.

[TownHall.com](http://TownHall.com)

### 3. Year of the Dog

*Our Spin:*

The Chinese New Year begins February 16<sup>th</sup> and it's the year of the dog. For you historians, dog is the eleventh in the 12-year cycle of Chinese zodiac sign. Why do I mention this? The new Resorts World Casino is expected to open and they expect to derive a large portion of their clientele from overseas. That's right, the casino will be equipped with an all mandarin speaking staff, Asian food selections, and lots of baccarat tables. This will represent the fourth commercial casino opening in the state with a

price tag of over 1.2 billion dollars. Did someone say cannibalization?

*The Story:*

Next week Empire Resorts, Inc., controlled by Lim Kok Thay, chairman of Genting Bhd., will open the doors to Resorts World Catskills, a \$1.2 billion casino, hotel and entertainment complex at the site of the old Concord Resort Hotel. The casino's address is 888 Resorts World Drive, a number in Mandarin that signifies triple good fortune for patrons and is often seen on Chinese-owned businesses. But it also could mean good fortune for the casino's owners, whose ability to attract Asian gamblers who believe in luck is a key to its prosperity. The February 8<sup>th</sup> opening comes eight days before the Chinese New Year.

In a bid to revive the upstate economy, New York awarded licenses in 2015 to Empire Resorts and two other casino operators for Las Vegas-style resorts. That gave Lim's companies a new opening. The casino adds hope that the region can once again be a dominant tourism hub.

The new 18-story, gleaming hotel tower in Thompson pokes out of the woods on Route 17. The casino and its supporters view the project as a cut above the other upstate facilities for a variety of reasons: It's 90 miles from New York City; has 332 all-suite hotel rooms; and caters to high rollers with VIP lounges, private gambling rooms with butlers, and villas with their own pools.

By year's end, it will have an entertainment village. And in 2019, it will have an indoor waterpark and reopen the Concord's former golf course, called "The Monster." "It is an integrated resort model. It's a not a regional casino model," Charles Degliomini, the casino's executive vice president, said from his office window overlooking the Catskill Mountains.

"Are we going to compete with regional casinos? Sure. For the mass market business? Sure," Degliomini said. "But our business model is going to be successful because we are pursuing markets that are underserved."

The casino will open with 2,150 slot machines, 130 table games, five gaming areas, two casino/entertainment bars; a 2,800-spot parking garage and lot; and a food court. Fine-dining restaurants should be opening within weeks after. The whole place will employ about 1,400 people. More than 100 hotel rooms will open on Feb. 8, with the rest available sometime in March.

[LoHud](http://LoHud)

