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# THE CRAIN'S INSIDER

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A daily newsletter on government action of importance to business

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## TODAY'S NEWS

### 'STUPID LAWS' PERSIST

"Stupid laws" that punish small businesses will remain on the books a little longer while a bill to repeal many of them is revised. City Councilmen Tom White, D-Queens, and David Yassky, D-Brooklyn, postponed today's scheduled introduction of the legislation. They are tweaking the language to avoid some unintended consequences. For the moment, it remains illegal for vendors to keep their licenses in their pockets or to display their hot dogs and knishes. And merchants still can't hose down their sidewalks.

### ONE GREEN VOTE

State Sen. John Sabini, D-Queens, says he's hurt that his old friend Mark Green endorsed his primary opponent, City Councilman Hiram Monserrate. Monserrate, in return, is backing Green for attorney general—one of a relatively few Hispanic politicians to do so. Yesterday, a coalition of dozens of Latino elected leaders endorsed attorney general candidate Andrew Cuomo.

### POWER LINE DOWN

The repair of one of two large transmission lines that was supposed to be completed by yesterday is taking longer than expected. The line won't be operating until Sept. 6, according to the New York Independent System Operator, which runs the state's electric grid. The 345-kilovolt cables owned by Consolidated Edison failed in early July, making New York City vulnerable to outages during

## City Council, elections board chief square off

The City Council is increasingly skeptical that the city Board of Elections will be able to revamp New York's voting machines as required by federal law. Forty council members now support a resolution—expected to be passed by a committee today—urging the Board of Elections to take specific steps toward compliance with the Help America Vote Act of 2002.

The board is underestimating the complexity—and vulnerability to tampering—of the electronic voting machines being considered for installation citywide next year,

says an aide to resolution sponsor Robert Jackson, D-Manhattan. The board still has a pull-lever mentality, says the aide, referring to the voting machines still in use.

But John Ravitz, the board's executive director, takes issue with the council resolution. Ravitz says that the board is working furiously to comply with HAVA and has detailed those efforts in a 36-page document sent to every council member. He adds that some of the measures called for in the resolution are impossible under state law.

hot weather. The first line was back in operation before this month's heat wave.

### MAYOR STEPS ASIDE

Mayor Mike Bloomberg has recused himself from participating in the decision over whether Verizon Communications will be granted a franchise to install fiber-optic TV in the city. The mayor is an owner of a cable network and has stayed away from cable franchise issues since his mayoralty began in 2002, his spokeswoman says. That is the guidance he was given by the city Conflicts of Interest Board.

### STATEN ISLAND FIGHT

Former Staten Island Republican County Chairman Bob Helbock outraised City Councilman Andrew Lanza \$63,000 to \$40,000

last month in their state Senate battle, according to results posted this week by the state Board of Elections. They both spent \$36,000. Lanza's cash went mostly to direct mail and consulting fees, leaving him with \$126,000 on hand. Helbock, who spent \$4,000 on polling, still trails with \$100,000 in the bank. Democrat Matt Titone will oppose the GOP primary winner in November.

## AT A GLANCE

**NEW JOB:** Eldin Villafane has joined midtown public relations firm Butler Associates as a partner. Villafane was communications director for Bronx Borough President Adolfo Carrión and will continue to work with Carrión as he campaigns for mayor.