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Dropping the Rock? As of press time, the NY State Assembly had passed a measure to overhaul the Rockefeller Drug Laws; an initiative that has moved through the Assembly year after year, but consistently met with resistance in the Senate. However, the Senate is now controlled by a more liberal majority and as such the bill appears to have traction in the upper house as well. A recent press release by the Senate Majority reports the Senate will in fact include the initiative in their budget proposal. The bill passed by the Assembly allows mandatory sentences for drug possession to be dropped in favor of discretion by judges and expands drug treatment as an alternative to prison. The Senate version appears to be sounding similar notes. Excerpts from the Senate Majority Press Release read...“the Senate intends to include the key provisions of Rockefeller Drug Law reform in our upcoming budget resolution to ensure adequate funding for treatment facilities... and an expansion of judicial discretion to ensure that judges can make informed sentencing decisions. We believe the best way to comprehensively achieve each of those goals would be to include these provisions as part of the State Budget.” To view the entire press release log onto <http://www.senate.state.ny.us/senatehomepage.nsf/home?openform> and click on “press releases.”

Dropping in the Polls ... Earlier in the week, the Institute for Public Opinion at Marist College released polling data that concluded Governor Paterson’s job approval was “at the lowest point in the 27 years that Marist has been surveying public opinion of New York governors. Only 26 percent of the 1,045 registered voters surveyed said Mr. Paterson was doing either a good or excellent job, while 71 percent said he was doing a fair or poor job. Eliot Spitzer’s ratings were at 30 percent on his last days in office.

Dropping his Salary ... While visiting Niagara Falls on Wednesday, the Governor suggested (though later withdrew such suggestion) that the legislature scale back their salaries by ten percent. He did however; reiterate his own commitment to cut his salary by \$17,900 (10 percent)

Dropping like Flies! Yet another of President Obama’s cabinet nominees dropped from contention today. Dr. Sanjay Gupta, Obama’s pick for Surgeon General pulled his candidacy citing he wanted to “focus on his medical career and spend more time with his family.”