

= Antoine Thompson =

Antoine Maurice Thompson ( born March 1 , 1970 ) was a Democratic New York State Senator who represented the state 's 60th Senate district , which includes parts of Buffalo and Tonawanda , the City of Niagara Falls and the Town of Grand Island . Thompson previously served for six years as the Masten District councilman in the Buffalo Common Council . Thompson has been a lifelong Buffalonian and held political and politically related professional positions in Buffalo before his service in elective politics .

Thompson was appointed to the city council in 2001 and was twice re-elected . He was discouraged from pursuing his interest in election to the United States House of Representatives in 2005 . He was encouraged to pursue a New York Senate Seat , but was not nominated by the Democratic Party when the seat first became available in a special election . However , during the 2006 general election for the seat , he was victorious . Thompson was challenged in the 2008 primary by the current holder of the seat but was victorious and was unchallenged in the November election . In 2010 Thompson won a 3 @-@ way primary battle but lost to Mark Grisanti , a Democrat who ran as a Republican . After the election Grisanti became a Republican .

= = Personal = =

Born in Buffalo , New York , Thompson is a 1994 graduate of State University of New York at Brockport where he received a bachelor of science in history . He was raised in Buffalo and was a graduate of public schools # 60 , # 61 and Bennett High School .

He is the son of Richard Allen Thompson and Wanda Strong Thompson , the husband of Merle Thompson , and the father of Deja LaShay and Joseph Antoine Alexander Thompson . In high school , he served as captain of both the cross @-@ country and track & field teams and earned All @-@ Western New York Honors in both . Thompson is a member of Alpha Phi Alpha .

= = Early career = =

Starting in 1996 , he served two years as a legislative assistant to the Buffalo Common Council . In early 1998 , he was named executive director of the Office of Urban Initiatives , which is a community development corporation that endeavors to improve business opportunities for minorities . After then @-@ City Councilman Byron Brown was elected to the New York State Senate in November 2000 , Thompson was favored for an appointment as Brown 's city council successor .

= = Councilman = =

Thompson was sworn in as the Masten District City Councilman on January 4 , 2001 after being appointed by the Democratic Committee . His east side district included 27 % of Buffalo 's African American population . The Buffalo City Council had a brief African @-@ American majority during Thompson 's appointed half term that ended following the subsequent elections in September and November 2001 . After African @-@ Americans lost their majority the council voted along racial lines by a 7 ? 6 margin to shrink the common council from thirteen to nine members by eliminating the four at @-@ large positions ( three of which were held by African @-@ Americans ) . The city voters endorsed the proposal by a 35 @,@ 849 ? 19 @,@ 036 margin which largely went along racial lines . Thompson retained his council position in the 2001 , 2003 and 2005 elections . Thompson served as a John Edwards delegate at the 2004 Democratic National Convention .

As a councilman , Thompson fought against crime and economic malaise in his district . He attempted to foster economic development and encourage support of worker training . Buffalo 's East Side , which included his district , was a hub for employment activity that lured suburban residents . Thompson also engaged in urban planning to restore public parks . As a city councilman , he co @-@ sponsored a resolution with David Franczyk against continued military involvement in the Iraq War .

= = = Higher office = = =

In 2005 , Thompson began testing the waters for higher office . He raised campaign funds and consulted party leaders about the possibility of challenging United States House of Representatives then 76 @-@ year @-@ old congresswoman Louise Slaughter who was already a 10 @-@ term veteran . Slaughter 's New York 's 28th congressional district was 29 percent African American , and minorities comprised nearly 40 percent of the Democratic primary vote . Charles B. Rangel warned that Slaughter had strong ties to the Congressional Black Caucus as well as strong support from labor , women 's and pro @-@ choice groups .

Thompson was encouraged to pursue Brown 's New York State Senate seat that was to be filled by special election on February 28 , 2006 after Brown ascended to be the Mayor of Buffalo on January 1 , 2006 following the 2005 election . The district has a 4 ? 1 ratio of registered Democrats to Republicans . In 2006 , the Erie County Democratic Party chairman was Leonard Lenihan , and he noted that Thompson had not been timely in entering the special election process . The Erie and Niagara County Democratic committees bypassed Thompson as their nominee in favor of Marc Coppola despite Brown 's backing .

Thompson had issued a threat that without backing for the State Senate seat , he would challenge Slaughter in the September primary election , but Lenihan was unimpressed with the threat and noted that Thompson needed to take a " Dale Carnegie course in terms of how to win friends and influence people " .

Brown and Lenihan were at odds over various political positions after Lenihan played a major role in Brown 's election to the office of Mayor . Brown supported Andrew Cuomo for New York Attorney General , David Paterson for Lieutenant Governor of New York and Thompson for 60th District New York Senator . Lenihan disagreed with each of these choices . Brown claimed a perceived racial slight but Lenihan pointed out that neither Anthony Masiello nor James D. Griffin was granted the right to pick their successor .

Thompson subsequently decided to run for the New York Senate seat in the November general election . Marc Coppola won the special election by a 56 ? 44 % margin in a district where Democrats outnumber Republicans more than 6 : 1 . Thompson opposed incumbent Senator Marc Coppola as well as his cousin Former State Sen. Al Coppola in the September 2006 Democratic Primary for a full two @-@ year term in the Senate . Thompson defeated both with 53 % of the vote . He then defeated Marc Coppola again in the General election where Coppola ran as an Independent .

= = Senator = =

Thompson assumed office in a Upstate New York district . When Thompson took office in January 2007 , he , along with Diane Savino and Jeffrey Klein ( both of whom later defected from the Democrats to form the core of the Independent Democratic Conference ) , assumed the chairmanship of the New York Democratic Senate Campaign Committee by assuming control of Democratic campaigns development . He retained this position through the 2008 general election .

Thompson was the Chairman of the Senate Environmental Conservation Committee . He was the former Ranking Minority Member of the Senate Cities Committee , which oversaw all legislation impacting the state 's 62 incorporated cities and urban policy . This position was held by his two immediate predecessors in the Senate , Byron Brown and Marc Coppola . Thompson served on the Finance ; Commerce , Economic Development and Small Business ; Tourism , Recreation and Sports Development and Veterans , Homeland Security and Military Affairs committees .

When Thompson assumed office , he continued his fight against economic blight with economic revitalization plans , with special focus on redevelopment of brownfield land , but he had to combat government inaction and bureaucracy in this effort .

Thompson had been allied with NY City developer Howard Milstein . In 2010 Thompson arranged for a \$ 400 @,@ 000 grant from NY State 's Economic Development Program for the Manhattan

billionaire 's Niagara Falls Redevelopment company to demolish properties in NiagaraFalls , NY . Thompson was a vocal spokesman against the May 2007 bill to raise State Senator salaries because the lack of raises for Buffalo city workers made it seem wrong to him . After refusing to comment on the issue for some time , Thompson was one of eight Democratic defectors on Eliot Spitzer 's unpopular policy allowing illegal aliens to obtain driver 's licenses . Thompson was one of eleven New York State Senators to be uncontested in the November 2008 general election . He supported the streamlining of minority- and woman @-@ owned business certification . He opposes fracking

Thompson voted in favor of same @-@ sex marriage legislation on December 2 , 2009 , but the bill was defeated .

He won the Democratic Party nomination in the September 14 , 2010 primary election . After a lengthy recount Thompson lost the general election to Mark Grisanti . Days before the election Thompson was named in a pay to play scandal where he received \$ 8600 from Aqueduct Entertainment Group ( AEG ) , who was attempting to secure a lucrative state contract to operate a video slot machine casino at Aqueduct Racetrack in Queens , New York .

= = Other = =

Thompson formerly hosted Western New York on the Move , a weekly radio show broadcast Thursdays at noon on WUFO 1080 AM .