

GOV WILL STRESS ENGLISH

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Byline: By JOE MAHONEY DAILY NEWS ALBANY BUREAU CHIEF

Body

Gov. Pataki told the state Conservative Party last night that he will devote himself to empowering "new immigrants" if elected to a third term this year.

"They are going to have kids who are fluent and capable in English," said Pataki, who has been spending considerable effort to attract Latino support as he prepares for the fall election.

He also said he would tell immigrants that work, not welfare, is "the American way."

Pataki was helping the party celebrate its 40th anniversary at its annual dinner at the Sheraton New York Hotel and Towers in Manhattan.

Keynote speaker Vice President Dick Cheney gave Pataki a thumbs-up for his leadership, praising him for guiding the state "with intelligence, conviction and good sense."

Showcased achievements

In addressing the crowd of 1,000, the GOP governor showcased his achievements in reducing New York's welfare caseload by more than 1 million and sharply cutting crime across the state.

The small but scrappy Conservative Party, which holds Row D on statewide ballots, is expected to endorse Pataki.

While New York may have a reputation as a liberal state, state controller candidate John Faso, a Columbia County Republican, said he sees no risk in running on the Conservative line.

"There never is a risk when you clearly enunciate your positions," Faso said. "Most of the people in the state agree with many of the positions of the Conservative Party - whether they know it or not."

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