



NEW YORK STATE SENATOR

Darrel J. Aubertine

## Aubertine Welcomes Putting Property Tax Relief on Agenda

DARREL J. AUBERTINE July 27, 2010

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Senator reiterates support for property tax cap, Energize NY, & opposition to tax on sugar drinks

WATERTOWN (July 27, 2010)—State Sen. Darrel J. Aubertine said today that putting property tax relief on the agenda for upcoming session would be welcomed as an opportunity to get much needed movement on this legislation in both houses. He also applauded the Governor's choice to put Energize New York legislation already passed by the Senate on the agenda for both houses.

"In the Senate, I voted with my colleagues to pass a property tax cap in 2008 and a comprehensive cap and circuit breaker this year, so the opportunity to again pass a much needed cap is welcomed," Sen. Aubertine

said. "The fact of the matter is that New York property owners pay the highest taxes in the nation and we need relief. The STAR program has provided some relief, but we must move forward now with a tax cap and a real plan for relief. We need the Assembly to come on board for all New Yorkers."

The Senate in March also passed legislation that would provide millions of dollars in relief to property owners in a fiscally responsible way that restricts rebates to middle class New Yorkers to fit within the economic constraints of the state's difficult financial crisis. The Senator has been pushing for a circuit breaker and has voted in favor of two separate caps on property tax increases including one in 2008, working toward a system that balances the needs of property taxpayers with the education needs of our students.

The New York State Commission on Property Tax Relief issued its report in June 2008, recommending a property tax cap, mandate relief and a circuit breaker, or income based tax relief system, to address the state's high property taxes. The Senator has supported these provisions and has worked to pass several mandate relief measures, along with a Tier V pension system to reduce government costs, and a 55/25 retirement option.

"We need to see movement in both houses on a property tax cap and on Energize New York," Sen. Aubertine said. "We need to build on the success of Power for Jobs program as a job retention tool, by passing this permanent program that will not only preserve jobs, but help this state create new ones. This program has bipartisan support in the Senate and the support of the Governor, but the Assembly has chosen not to act."

Sen. Aubertine sponsored Energize New York legislation after reaching a bipartisan agreement in the Senate and with the Governor to improve the state's successful job retention programs, such as Power for Jobs, which use the resources of the New York Power Authority to provide low cost power and rebates to businesses. The Senate passed this bill 59-2 but the Assembly has not acted on it.

"We need to get the cost of government down and operate more efficiently," Sen. Aubertine said. "We cannot afford to ask the working families of this state to pay more of their hard earned income in taxes. The spending bills in this budget included some serious cuts to state programming, but the reality is that government must learn to do more with less and the property tax cap in conjunction with mandate relief and a circuit breaker keeps us on the right track."

While the Senator said he is pleased the Governor is pushing property tax relief and Energize New York as lawmakers return to handle the final bill of the 2010-11 state budget, he questioned the Governor's rationale for also pushing for higher taxes on sugar sweetened beverages, a move that would substantially increase the cost of many beverages at a time when families can least afford it. Likewise, he reiterated his concerns with wine in grocery store legislation that has not been amended to better address the concerns of liquor store owners and small wineries.

"The property tax cap is needed because we need to look at reducing taxes, not creating new ones," Sen. Aubertine said. "We need to shut down this budget process because taxpayers cannot afford to see this state go back on the progress we've made changing the Governor's proposed budget. Let's not forget that we could have had that budget April 1, but that budget would have closed Ogdensburg Correctional, our parks and historic sites. It would have swept the snowmobile registration fund and put new taxes on sugared beverages and hospitals. That budget would have been disastrous for Upstate New York. We cannot roll back on the improvements we've made and must stand strong against these new taxes."

The Governor on Monday issued a proclamation for session on July 28 at 6 p.m. with an agenda that included the property tax cap, SUNY empowerment, selling wine in grocery stores, sugar tax, and Energize New York among 10 bills.