



NEW YORK STATE SENATOR

Thomas F. O'Mara

Senator O'Mara's weekly column 'From the Capitol' -- for the week of October 2, 2023 -- 'Most New Yorkers not hopeful about the future'

THOMAS F. O'MARA October 2, 2023

| ISSUE: **STATE GOVERNMENT SPENDING; TAXPAYERS**



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Senator O'Mara offers his weekly perspective on many of the key challenges and issues facing the Legislature, as well as on legislative actions, local initiatives, state programs and policies, and more. Stop back every Monday for Senator O'Mara's latest column...

This week, **"Most New Yorkers not hopeful about the future"**

ALBANY, Oct. 2, 2023 -- I recently highlighted results from the Siena Research Institute's latest statewide poll, specifically pointing out that 60% of respondents viewed the migrant crisis as a major problem and more than 80% see the cost of living in New York as a top concern.

According to Siena, "In assessing the severity of problems facing New York, there is, surprisingly, considerable agreement among Democrats, Republicans, and independents."

In other words, there are across-the-board, deep concerns about the direction this state is heading.

One other response deserves additional attention, in my view. Nearly 60% of the respondents to Siena's recent survey say that the quality of life in this state is getting worse. It's a response that has unfolded over the past several years that New York has been under one-party control.

I've stressed it before, and it bears repeating: Albany just keeps delivering uncertainty to New Yorkers. Uncertainty about making ends meet. Uncertainty over crime and public safety. Uncertainty that we will ever get this economy turned around.

A government that delivers uncertainty to its citizens has consequences. It leads to the nation-leading population losses that New York is already experiencing. It leads to decline. It leads, ultimately, to nearly 60 percent of citizens having a negative view of the quality of life.

And there's no end in sight.

The latest we hear on the migrant crisis continues the uncertainty. We're not hearing that Governor Hochul will convene an emergency legislative session to take concrete actions that can truly begin addressing this chaos. What we heard last week, instead, was only a warning from the governor that the ongoing costs to taxpayers will be "substantial," well beyond the more than one billion dollars the state already provided in this year's budget.

All we're hearing from New York State's one-party rulers is their typical knee-jerk reaction: 1) raise taxes, and 2) demand more money from the federal government to pay for their self-induced sanctuary city and state migrant crisis. Not one word on stemming the flow of illegal immigrants across our southern border or reinstating the remain-in-Mexico policy.

The latest we hear on the Hochul-driven strategy to radically restructure New York's energy future is that a new coalition of statewide business leaders are undertaking a campaign to highlight the plan's unworkable timeline and unsustainable costs. Where have they been for the past four years while this Green New Deal was being fashioned and rammed through? Cowing to wokeism and climate zealots, that's where. Better late than never, I guess, that they now echo what I and many of us in the minority have been warning all along about the climate plan's unintended, dire consequences and mountainous costs for ratepayers and taxpayers alike. The current plan will eviscerate our economy at all levels, make New York State far more unaffordable to live or do business in -- and it will do nothing to impact climate change.

"New York is at a crossroads," Business Council President and CEO Heather Mulligan said in announcing the campaign. "We are a worldwide leader in environmental initiatives and green energy policies, and we must and will continue to be the leader. But we must also look at the policies and determine what is feasible, what is affordable and what is best for the future of the state."

The latest we hear about Governor Hochul's economic and fiscal leadership is that it's failing. Leadership, by the way, which has been founded over the past several years on a skyrocketing state budget, the state's largest-ever spending spree, and that has been gleefully encouraged (and increased) by her Democrat legislative allies in the Senate and Assembly. Now we know that it has left state taxpayers facing exploding budget deficits over the next three years, deficits expected to reach nearly \$40 billion and that's before factoring in the ever-escalating costs of the migrant crisis and an unworkable timeline for implementing renewable energy mandates.

On and on it goes and it just keeps getting worse. As the recent Siena poll revealed, it leaves most New Yorkers feeling not so hopeful about the future.

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