



NEW YORK STATE SENATOR

Betty Little

Sen. Little Reacts to Gov's State of State: Property Tax Relief Must Be a Priority

BETTY LITTLE January 6, 2009

Statement by Sen. Betty Little

Reaction to Gov. David Paterson's State of the State Address

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"Governor Paterson's State of the State address was a somber assessment of our financial condition but also an optimistic call for hope, courage and action. We face a tremendous challenge in having to overcome a \$15 billion budget deficit over the next 16 months. The importance of lawmakers and the governor working together, putting aside the partisan sniping and avoiding the gridlock that has come to define Albany politics, cannot be overstated.

"My goal this session is to ensure that taxpayers, in particular property taxpayers, are not unfairly burdened with higher taxes at a time when most cannot afford any increase. Property tax relief remains a priority of mine, including mandate relief for local governments and schools and reforming the system to make it more equitable. I will oppose state cuts that force local governments and school districts to make up the difference with property tax increases.

"We need to grow our way out of the recession by fostering an environment that encourages entrepreneurship while helping existing businesses not just survive but do better. I was pleased to hear the governor talk at length about investing in the Upstate economy. The Senate late last year approved a tax break plan for small businesses that collectively employ millions of New Yorkers. These are tax cuts that will help North Country businesses. We now need the support of the Assembly and governor to make it a reality this year. Promoting economic development is the healthiest way to generate more revenue for state and local governments.

"I am looking forward to joining Governor Paterson at a town hall meeting in Watertown next week to discuss North Country priorities, concerns and our ideas to move the state forward. To meet the challenges ahead, we need the help of local people – business owners, community, economic development and elected leaders, hospital and school officials and taxpayers. I applaud the governor's open approach."