



NEW YORK STATE SENATOR

Dean G. Skelos

Senate Republicans Push for Property Tax Relief in State Budget

DEAN G. SKELOS April 2, 2009

Members of the New York State Republican Conference today proposed an amendment to budget legislation being advanced on the Senate floor that would restore \$1.45 billion in property tax relief for New York's middle class homeowners. Senate Democrats voted to defeat the amendment.

The budget plan being advanced by the Governor and legislative leaders completely eliminates the STAR property tax rebate checks, placing an additional burden on homeowners struggling with rising property taxes across the state.

"Providing property tax relief to New York's struggling homeowners has always been the number one priority of the Republican conference," said Senator Republican Leader Dean G. Skelos. "Now, more than ever, families are struggling to make ends meet, and they look forward to this money to help them pay their bills. This budget places new taxes on everything from car registration to cell phone usage – the last thing we should be doing is eliminating much needed property tax relief."

"I am very upset and saddened to see the STAR rebate check program removed from this year's budget," said Senator Roy McDonald. "The community members within my district, and throughout the state count on this money every year to provide for their families. It is unfortunate to see the Governor and legislative leaders shift the burden of closing this year's

budget gap onto the back of Upstate New York families. I was at the forefront, fighting diligently for STAR at its inception, and it is disappointing to see the State turn away from this very successful program.”

“The STAR rebate check program is a critically important part of many families’ and seniors’ budgets, particularly at this time,” said Senator Mike Ranzenhofer. “Families and seniors are tightening their belts and reducing their budgets and the last thing they need is for the Governor and the Legislature to take money out of their pockets.”

"We already pay the highest property taxes in the nation. Now to make matters worse, the Governor and the two Legislative Leaders have decided to strip homeowners of their STAR Rebate checks. At a time when families and seniors are struggling to make ends meet, the last thing we should be doing is adding to their crushing burden. Taking these checks away is shortsided and is yet another example of how the problems of average New Yorkers are being ignored," said Senator Carl Marcellino.

Senate Republicans initiated the STAR rebate check program, which provides a yearly check mailed directly to homeowners to help ease the burden of skyrocketing property taxes, in 2006.

The amendment proposed today would have provided an additional \$368.64 million in relief for homeowners on Long Island; \$305.82 for the Hudson Valley; \$187.96 million for New York City; \$177.76 million for Central New York; \$141.56 for Western New York; \$140.09 million for the Capital Region and North Country; and \$130.84 million for Rochester.