



NEW YORK STATE SENATOR

Betty Little

Little: Deficit Reduction Plan Raises Health Care Taxes

BETTY LITTLE February 3, 2009

State Senator Betty Little voted against a deficit reduction plan approved yesterday by the Assembly and Senate, saying that lawmakers and the public were not given an adequate opportunity to consider the \$1.6 billion spending reduction plan.

“We received the bill copy just hours before the vote,” said Little. “When you’re dealing with significant cuts to programs and services affecting your constituents and businesses, you obviously want to know what you’re voting on. It’s important lawmakers have the chance to offer some alternatives.”

Little said the plan includes several components that will hurt the economy, including a \$240 million increased assessment on insurance companies that will result in higher health insurance premiums for families and businesses and a sweep of almost \$500 million from the New York Power Authority (NYPA), which could be used to reduce energy costs for businesses.

“Now is clearly not the time to increase costs for New York business owners,” said Little. “Raising taxes on health insurance runs completely contrary to the discussion about the need to find innovative ways to control health care costs.”

“And while we continue to hear a lot of rhetoric about the importance of helping the Upstate economy, taking funding from NYPA which could be used to reduce energy costs for manufacturers sends a terrible message at a time when businesses need some good news.”

Little said the plan approved yesterday includes funding cuts to many North County programs and organizations, including: ORDA, The Trudeau Institute, Road Salt Study, Adirondack North Country Association, Glens Falls/South Street Revitalization Program, Elizabethtown Hospital, Alice Hyde Medical Center, North Country Health Care Providers, Glens Falls Hospital, North Country Children’s Mental Health and Plattsburgh Air Force Base.