



NEW YORK STATE SENATOR

Betty Little

## New Budget Eliminates Rebate Check, Retains STAR Exemption

BETTY LITTLE April 5, 2009

State Senator Betty Little today said the state budget adopted last week eliminates the STAR rebate check program, but still provides for the STAR school property tax exemption. Little said her office has received dozens of phone calls from constituents concerned that the budget has eliminated the school tax relief program completely.

“If we’ve received dozens of calls, I have to believe hundreds if not thousands of people are confused by this change,” said Little. “I want to assure residents that their STAR exemption will continue this year. But they should also know that the rebate check they’ve received the past few years will not be arriving in the mailbox this fall.”

The new budget continues to fund the School Tax Relief Program, known as STAR, which provides homeowners a partial exemption from school property taxes. There are two categories, Basic STAR for all residential homeowners and Enhanced STAR, which is available to senior citizens who meet an income requirement.

The STAR property tax rebate check program was in addition to Basic and Enhanced STAR. The rebate amount was based on the homeowner’s school tax rate and income. STAR rebate checks sent directly to homeowners ranged between \$300 and \$400 for many North Country homeowners.

“One of my primary reasons for voting against this year’s budget was the elimination of the rebate check and absence of a new plan to address the property tax problem.”