



NEW YORK STATE SENATOR

William Larkin

Senator Larkin Blasts Reckless Pay Raises and Bloated Bureaucracy at Port Authority

WILLIAM J. LARKIN JR. July 27, 2009

Ranking Member of Corporations, Authorities Committee Demands Accountability

Senator William Larkin (R-C, New Windsor), the ranking member of the Senate Corporations, Authorities and Commissions Committee, today blasted the leadership of the Port Authority of New York and New Jersey for approving massive new pay increases for its senior staff during a time of severe fiscal and economic distress for New York State.

According to a shocking news account published in the New York Post this weekend, the payroll for the bi-state agency saw the number of employees making six-figure salaries soar by 205 in 2008, with some executives receiving 20 percent pay raises.

Among the largest raises were pay hikes totaling \$35,802, \$31,460 and \$29,000 -- all of which were paid to staffers who already make well over \$200,000 per year. In addition, the total number of executives who received more than \$200,000 in pay has nearly doubled over the course of the past year alone (from 12 in 2007 to 23 in 2008).

"These outrageous pay hikes are the height of arrogance, especially since they are coming at a time when our state and our nation are facing severe fiscal and economic challenges," said Senator Larkin. "Making matters even worse, these pay hikes are taking place at a time when the Port Authority is raising tolls on hardworking New Yorkers at six different locations, and when the rebuilding effort at Ground Zero appears to be moving at a snail's pace.

"Governor Paterson should not only demand that these pay increases be rescinded, he should also demand that the Port Authority get its act together at the World Trade Center site so that we can strengthen New York's economy, create new private sector jobs and improve the quality of life for all New Yorkers."

At the World Trade Center site, the Port Authority of New York and New Jersey has projected that more than 26,000 jobs and \$3.7 billion in income would be created by 2016 from the construction of office towers, a Sept. 11 memorial and transit hub at the 16-acre site. Developer Larry Silverstein has said that work at those towers would generate a total of 30,000 jobs.

Last year, the agency spent some \$161 million to cover the salaries of more than 1,000 of its employees who earned more than \$100,000 -- or nearly 20 percent of its overall workforce. In 2007, the PA doled out

\$134 million to 1,093 employees who received six-figure salaries.

“Instead of working overtime to help strengthen our economy and create new jobs, the Port Authority seems to be more interested in handing out huge pay increases. This reckless spending binge is just plain wrong, and Governor Paterson needs to crack down on the Port Authority and get these free-spending bureaucrats back in line,” Senator Larkin concluded.