



NEW YORK STATE SENATOR

John J. Bonacic

Bonacic: End the Suny Tax, Don't Increase Welfare Spending

JOHN J. BONACIC August 12, 2009

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State Senator John J. Bonacic (R/I/C – Mt. Hope) has indicated his opposition to Governor David Paterson's decision to give "bonuses" to welfare recipients and said the Governor should have used the funding for either property tax relief, or to end the tax on SUNY tuition imposed earlier this year. Bonacic voted against imposing the tax on SUNY tuition. Paterson's plan was implemented without public comment.

Under Paterson's direction, welfare bonus grants will go to welfare recipients with school age children – even if the children are not actually going to school, and even if the welfare recipients are under sanction from the State because they refuse to comply with work or job search requirements. Every welfare household will receive \$200 per school age child.

"The State's Democratic leaders have refused to vote on property tax reform, taken the STAR rebate checks, and even taxed SUNY tuition by nearly \$500 per student – but they want to give out welfare bonuses. The radical left of the Democratic Party has taken over New York," Bonacic said.

SUNY officials have estimated the SUNY tax will cost families and SUNY students approximately \$122 million. Meanwhile, Paterson's "bonus" for welfare recipients will cost the State \$140 million in Federal stimulus funding.

"This is not about criticizing the poor. I was born poor. The American dream came to my parents, my brother, sister and I through one thing, – hard work. The promise of America to immigrant families, like mine, was opportunity," Bonacic said.

Bonacic noted it was President Clinton who pushed the Democratic party to a more moderate position on issues like workfare not welfare, and protecting people from crime. Now, the new Democrat leaders are giving out welfare bonuses and allowing drug dealers to become school teachers. "President Clinton spoke of opportunity, combined with individual responsibility and hard work. Governor Paterson's giveaway program fails to require responsibility or work," Senator Bonacic said.

Bonacic called on area Democratic State and Federal officials to denounce Paterson's latest stunt. The Senator also noted the difference between welfare benefits and unemployment or workers compensation benefits. "I want to make clear that those who are receiving unemployment benefits, disability payments, or Workers Compensation deserve as much assistance as possible - more in fact than they are receiving. They have a demonstrated track record in the workforce and are temporarily going through a hard time. That is far different from giving bonuses to those who have not been in the workforce for a very long time, if ever, as Governor Paterson is now doing," concluded Senator Bonacic.

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