



NEW YORK STATE SENATOR

George Winner

Winner Welcomes Call for State Spending Cap

GEORGE WINNER November 6, 2009

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Albany, N.Y., November 6—State Senator George Winner (R-C-I, Elmira) welcomed today Governor David Paterson's call for the state Legislature to approve a cap on state spending when it returns to session next week.

That's because Winner himself has previously called for and co-sponsored legislation to implement a constitutionally mandated cap on state spending along with additional, comprehensive state spending reforms.

Paterson has called state lawmakers back to the Capitol on Tuesday for an “**extraordinary session**.” The governor’s agenda for Tuesday includes a spending cap proposal that mirrors, but doesn’t go as far as the plan Winner has sponsored – and that the Senate’s approved -- in the past.

"Welcome aboard, governor," said Winner. "The number one challenge in the foreseeable future in New York government will be to meet our fundamental responsibilities with less spending and smarter spending. I'd also like to see us confront this challenge with an emphasis on public accountability."

Winner co-sponsored legislation approved by the Senate last year to amend the New York State Constitution (S. 7134, approved by the Senate on March 12, 2008) and limit year-to-year state spending increases to 120 percent of the consumer price index (CPI) or 4 percent, whichever is less. In any given year, 50 percent of state tax revenues exceeding the cap would be placed in a reserve fund, with the other half being returned to taxpayers in the form of direct rebates.

Winner said that if a similar cap had been in place over the past five years, state taxpayers would have saved \$13.1 billion.

To build on their spending cap proposal, Winner and his colleagues have also proposed in the past an “Accountability in Government Spending” strategy calling for:

- the first time ever, public expenditure reports from all state agencies and the judiciary;
- requiring all state agencies to develop long-term strategic plans and follow performance budgeting principles; and

-- creating a new website (ResultsNYS.com) -- patterned after sites operated by the federal Office of Management and Budget ([ExpectMore.gov](#)) and the commonwealth of Virginia ([Virginia Performs](#)) -- that would enable the public to review the performance of government programs.

Winner said that ResultsNYS.com would enable visitors to review government expenditures, evaluate the performance of state programs and services, and submit their own suggestions and recommendations on how to stop government waste and reduce state spending.