



NEW YORK STATE SENATOR

Joseph E. Robach

Senator Joe Robach Addresses Governor Paterson's Proposed Budget Cuts

JOSEPH E. ROBACH November 9, 2009

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In April, along strict party lines, my downstate Senate majority colleagues voted to pass a disastrous budget that raised taxes by more than \$8 billion and increased spending by 9%, three times the rate of inflation. I joined with other Upstate Senate members to adamantly oppose this horrific budget, warning that the level of spending was unprecedented, irresponsible and unsustainable. As a result of that passed budget, New York State now faces an even greater budget deficit than before.

While I agree that cuts need to be made, cutting funding for vital services and resources that our families and seniors have come to rely on, must only be considered as a last resort. I have always been concerned with cuts that focus on public safety, the education of our children, and health care for those who need it.

We can immediately make cuts on other State expenditures that would close this year's budget gap; including:

- Across the board cut in all agency contracts - \$519 million
- Consolidate state agencies & authorities - \$280 million
- Reduce state non-personal services by 5% - \$138 million
- Freeze state purchase of recreational lands - \$78 million

- Eliminate executive unspent lump sum balances - \$50 million
- Suspend non-essential state vehicles and equipment purchases - \$250 million
- Enhance Medicaid fraud coordination - \$175 million
- Impose a 10% reduction in legislative staff and member item initiatives - \$30 million

These initiatives, coupled with maximizing existing revenue streams, would eliminate the need to balance the budget by raising taxes or offsetting costs to local governments, forcing them to raise property taxes on our families. Albany should be leading by example, reigning in the cost of government and tightening our belt just like all New Yorkers have been forced to do. I will continue working with my legislative colleagues to close this gap while protecting our cash-strapped taxpayers.