



NEW YORK STATE SENATOR

George Onorato

Statement On Deficit Reduction Plan

GEORGE ONORATO December 15, 2009

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STATEMENT BY SENATOR GEORGE ONORATO

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“The bi-partisan Deficit Reduction Plan approved by the Senate and Assembly may have been a long time coming, but I believe the final legislation – which closes almost \$3 billion of New York State’s budget gap

– is far superior to the original plan proposed by the Governor.

“I and other members of the Senate Democratic Conference stood firm against mid-year cuts to schools, and also rejected health care cuts that would have cost New York hundreds of millions of dollars in lost federal funds. The final plan does not impose any new taxes on

New Yorkers, prevents the loss of thousands of jobs that would have been lost through service cuts, and ensures that poor, elderly and disabled New Yorkers receiving Supplemental Security Income (SSI) do not suffer a 10 percent cut in their benefits.

“Of course, even though I believe we averted the most harmful cuts and enacted sensible alternatives to the Governor’s plan for closing the gap, we needed to make real reductions in state spending. So this plan is not without pain. We cannot meet the challenge of these dire economic times without reining in state spending, and finding smart ways to save money. In the latter case, for example, we approved legislation that will cut down on the use of expensive outside information technology consultants – saving New York money and protecting state jobs.

“In just a month, the Legislature will be returning to the State Capitol for the 2010 session, and a new cycle of state budget negotiations will soon begin. Although there are some indications that our economy is starting to rebound, there is no question that we will once again need to make difficult decisions to get our fiscal house back in order. However, I am hopeful that the deficit reduction plan we passed will help to set the stage for further thoughtful discussions on how we can overcome our economic challenges while maintaining our commitment to our state’s working families, seniors, children and other vulnerable New Yorkers who are suffering the most in this economic downturn.”