



NEW YORK STATE SENATOR

James L. Seward

CSI - Upstate

JAMES L. SEWARD January 8, 2010



ONEONTA, 01/08/10 -- In media conferences across his district kicking off the 2010 session of the New York State Senate, Senator James L. Seward (R/C/I – Oneonta) outlined his agenda of state spending cuts, property tax relief and business investments he dubbed “*CSI – Upstate.*”

“It does not take a forensic scientist to decipher that New York is facing tough times. Upstate in particular has been victimized by higher taxes and out of control state spending. However, commonsense spending reductions, real property tax relief and targeted support for our small businesses can help put New York back on track,” Seward said.

Cap state spending. Seward is calling for a state spending cap that will force New York government to live within its means. In order to bring the state's finances in line Seward has proposed a number of additional spending reductions including:

Consolidation of redundant or underutilized state agencies;

Increased Medicaid fraud detection;

Freeze state purchases of recreational lands;

Enforce state law to collect \$500 million in cigarette taxes on Indian reservations.

“Families and businesses across New York have been living with less for some time; state government needs to follow suit and do some belt tightening of its own. Maximizing resources at all levels of the state will make for a more cost-effective government, leading the way toward a more fiscally sound New York.”

Slice property taxes. Seward is proposing property tax relief measures that will allow families to afford to stay in their homes. Reinstating the STAR rebate check program to help struggling families and senior citizens is a top priority; Seward helped initiate the program in 2006 and fought its elimination in 2009.

“The governor and the rest of his downstate cohorts raised taxes last year to record levels to fuel an unprecedented government spending spree. Thanks to the current state budget, families are paying an additional \$2,400 in taxes and fees. Tack on the loss of the STAR rebate check and the cost goes even higher. Families and businesses have been fleeing the state because of the tax hikes; we need to offer them a reason to stay. Continually raiding their bank accounts is not the answer.”

Invest in upstate business. Seward renewed his call for targeted assistance for the business community. His plan calls for tax cuts for small businesses and manufacturers that will help them compete in the regional, national and global marketplace. The plan would also cut burdensome government regulations that deter companies from opening or relocating in upstate New York. Seward's plan would also increase the availability of low cost power, job training services and job creation credits.

“Our upstate businesses are a vital component of New York’s future, helping them thrive must be part of our overall recovery strategy. We need a realistic economic development plan that creates new high tech jobs and provides incentives to keep our young people right here. Our family farms also need to be a recovery focal point. Agriculture is New York’s number one industry and supporting this building block of our economy is essential.”

Seward is also calling for comprehensive ethics reform measures and mandate relief to assist local school districts and governments.

“I fought hard for a number of governmental reforms last year but it was just a start. We need stronger ethics rules to restore public confidence in Albany and ensure government is more responsive to the people’s needs. We also need to ease the restraints on our local officials and allow them to operate in a more cost effective manner that will provide savings to property taxpayers.

“Unlike a television drama, we cannot solve New York’s problems in 60 minutes. However, by bringing state spending under control, easing fees and taxes forced on our property owners and working with our economic partners in the business community we can close the book on this challenging case,” Seward concluded.