



NEW YORK STATE SENATOR

George D. Maziarz

## Power Authority Still Sending Mixed Messages to Niagara County

GEORGE D. MAZIARZ January 20, 2010

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Senator George Maziarz (R-C, Newfane) today critiqued Governor Paterson's proposal to create a \$25 million Small Business Revolving Loan fund through the 2010-2011 state budget. The seed money to establish the loan fund would come from the New York Power Authority. According to the Division of Budget, the Fund would "target minorities, women, and other New Yorkers who have difficulty accessing regular credit markets."

"Look, helping small businesses is a good thing," Senator Maziarz said. "But there is no preference in this proposal for small businesses in the Niagara Region. This is another unfortunate example of using Power Authority revenues, which are generated almost exclusively at the Niagara Power Project, for statewide purposes. I can't think of any other word for it than 'exploitation.'"

Senator Maziarz noted that the proposal for the program, released as part of the executive budget presentation on Tuesday, came on the heels of the Power Authority's announcement that it could not bolster Niagara County's Empower Niagara program with 2 additional megawatts of hydropower to be used for economic development.

"The Power Authority is still sending us mixed messages about its commitment to treating the Niagara Region fairly," Senator Maziarz said. "We make strides in some areas, and see setbacks in others. We need to continue to monitor the Power Authority's actions closely to make sure they are accountable to us."

Senator Maziarz added, "The Power Authority transferred \$550 million into the state's coffers last year. The Power Authority is putting forward \$105 million for waterfront improvements in Buffalo. We must be vigilant in seeing that the Power Authority's generosity to projects and programs beyond the borders of Niagara County, where the Power Project is located, is matched and even surpassed here at home."

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