



NEW YORK STATE SENATOR

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## Saland to Democrat Leadership: Just Say No to Tax and Fee Increases

STEPHEN M. SALAND March 11, 2010

| ISSUE: **BUDGET**

It feels like déjà vu all over again as we look at a looming budget deadline and little action from our State leaders.

The Governor delivered his Executive Budget on January 19, 2010 and since that time; many Albany politicians have captured headlines. Unfortunately, the headlines have had nothing to do with budget agreement, bringing jobs to New York or reducing our heavy tax burden. Instead, we have been inundated with one scandal after the next. It's no wonder people have lost faith in their government.

One of the biggest scandals, however, is the lack of progress made on this year's budget. The Democrat leadership has flagrantly ignored the state budget reform law adopted in 2007 which provided a blueprint for an open process that leads to an on-time budget.

When we followed this process in 2008, it worked, breaking a pattern of years of late budgets. We finally had a formula for open budget negotiations that broke years of gridlock and delivered an on-time budget. Unfortunately, however, 2009 brought us one-party control and the new budget reform law was thrown by the wayside and the State Budget was negotiated by three men in a room, behind closed doors in clear violation of the Budget Reform Act.

What we got with one party control was a bloated State Budget that raised taxes and fees by \$8.5 billion and increased spending by \$12 billion in the midst of a recession. The Budget, negotiated by three Democrats from New York City, stripped us of our STAR rebate checks and did absolutely nothing to create new private sector jobs. Needless to say, I and my Republican colleagues railed against this atrocity. As was the case with the MTA payroll tax, it would have taken just one Senate Democrat to stop the Budget that raised our taxes and increased our spending so dramatically. Unfortunately, each and every one turned their backs on the taxpayers of New York.

By ignoring the budget reform law, they took two steps backwards and created a \$9 billion deficit this year.

While time is running short to meet the April 1<sup>st</sup> deadline, it can be done. I call on my colleagues in the Democrat Majority to open the process, consider our proposals to cap state spending, reject taxes and fee increases to balance the budget and adopt our Job Creation and Retention Plan that has been endorsed by the National Federation of Independent Business as what New York needs to attract jobs to our State.

The message is simple. Listen to the public. Follow the law. Open the budget process. Control spending. Create jobs. And say no to tax and fee increases.