



NEW YORK STATE SENATOR

Darrel J. Aubertine

Aubertine Pushes for Property Tax Relief

DARREL J. AUBERTINE March 18, 2010

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Senator calls “circuit breaker” legislation the beginning of a meaningful debate

ALBANY (March 18, 2010)—State Sen. Darrel J. Aubertine today said meaningful bipartisan discussions on property tax relief must start now, while lawmakers are engaged in the budget process and well before the close of session in June.

To that end, the Senator today joined his colleagues for a near unanimous vote (58-1) to pass a bill that would create a circuit breaker tax relief system, restore rebate checks for seniors and put a cap on property tax levy increases which still maintains for school districts the latitude they need to educate our children.

“This is about finding ways to cut taxes,” Sen. Aubertine said. “New York State has the highest property taxes in the nation and we need to install a system that will provide meaningful relief based on an individual’s ability to pay. This legislation starts us toward that goal with an income based relief structure which is needed because the value of a home is not an indicator of a homeowner’s ability to pay.”

The legislation passed today would provide millions of dollars in relief to property owners in a fiscally responsible way that restricts rebates to middle class New Yorkers to fit within the economic constraints of the state’s difficult financial crisis. The Senator has been pushing for a circuit breaker and has voted in favor of caps on property tax increases, working toward a system that balances the needs of property taxpayers with the education needs of our students.

This legislation would also enable farmers to discount the payments made on equipment and machinery from their income for eligibility in the program, similar to legislation the Senator introduced (S.4451).

“This bill captures the essence of a bill I introduced in this house to enable farmers to show their real income when determining eligibility for STAR,” Sen. Aubertine said. “Currently, many farmers unable to receive STAR benefits because the payments they make on equipment cannot be deducted from their adjusted gross income. This bill addresses that and will provide new relief to many farmers.”

In addition to this direct property tax relief, the Senator pushed for and passed Tier V pension relief, which will save the state, local governments and school districts billions over the next few decades. Earlier this week, he voted for mandate relief which passed the Senate to free up school districts to do more with less and more efficiently use taxpayer revenue in the education of our children. Likewise, he is pushing for legislation to provide retirement incentives for teachers at 55 years old with 25 years of service, a move that will clear school districts of high salaries and open up opportunities for new teachers.