



NEW YORK STATE SENATOR

Joseph P. Addabbo Jr.

Addabbo: Let's Get a State Budget That's Done Right and Close to on Time

JOSEPH P. ADDABBO JR March 29, 2010

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ADDABBO: LET'S GET A STATE BUDGET THAT'S DONE RIGHT AND CLOSE TO ON TIME

Senator Joseph P. Addabbo, Jr. today stated that it was more important for the state budget to be done efficiently than on time. "Given the fact that we are facing the largest budget deficit in New York State history since the great depression and the religious holidays are this week, completing a complex budget by April 1 seems unrealistic. Therefore, I am more concerned about making the appropriate spending cuts and not raising taxes." Addabbo said. The senator believes that there is a unique opportunity to evaluate the efficiency of the state agencies and to streamline our state government.

The New York State Budget is burdened by a deficit that could be larger than \$9.5 billion. In March, The Senate passed a significant property tax reduction measure. This proposal will be discussed during the budget negotiations that will take place in Albany in the coming days. This legislation was an important first step and could provide property tax relief to more than 53,000 households in Addabbo's district. Now the issue becomes what cuts in spending need to be made in order to pay for the property tax reduction or any other restoration to the proposed cuts by Governor David Paterson.

The next important step in the state's budget process occurred in late March, when the Senate passed a Budget Resolution that started the revenue and spending cuts negotiation process through Conference Committees to begin in earnest. Conference Committees are public forums where legislators from both the Senate and the Assembly discuss various budget topics. Senator Addabbo was named to the Conference Committee that deals with energy, the environment, housing and local governments.

The Senate Budget Resolution, which is only a proposal to start the budget negotiations, included a rejection of the governor's proposals to implement \$1.1 billion in new taxes, a restoration of senior funding cuts, protected State Parks, provided for property tax relief, and does not include the borrowing of monies to solve the deficit. Critics of the resolution point to the proposed cuts to education and the lack of deep spending reductions. "This resolution is a starting point from which the budget gets negotiated." Addabbo explained. "I expect that after Democrats and Republicans come together to review budget alternatives and start to restore some of these proposed cuts, we will wind up in a slightly better place." Once Conference Committees have completed their deliberations, the legislative leaders will consider the reports of each committee which normally shapes the final budget. Addabbo expressed optimism that the budget deficit will be addressed in an efficient and open manner that will protect vital services and not bring huge increases in the cost of living. He said, "Make no mistake, this is going to be a bad budget due to a bad economy. Many credible programs will be cut and the state will have to do more with less. What is important is that these cuts must be restored when the state is fiscally able to do so. There is no valid reason we in the legislature could not agree on a state budget in early April." Addabbo stated. "We are all in this together and by working together I believe we will weather our state's fiscal crisis."