



NEW YORK STATE SENATOR

Roy J. McDonald

Senator Hosts Round Table Discussion with Community Leaders at the Capitol

ROY J. MCDONALD April 1, 2010



McDonald: “Only an April Fool Would Take a Legislative Vacation, I’m here working”

Albany – April 1, 2010 - Senator Roy McDonald invited numerous community leaders from Rensselaer and Saratoga Counties to the Capitol today for a round table discussion on the New York State Budget. McDonald emphasized the importance of putting together a good budget and that public input was a critical component of the process.

Flanked by local elected officials, business leaders, school representatives, and health service providers, McDonald expressed frustration with his legislative colleagues decision to forego legitimate work and take a two week vacation that essentially puts state business in limbo.

"If this were the private sector, people would be working during this period. Every legislator has the right to recognize their particular religious holiday, but otherwise we need to be working," McDonald continued. "Hard working men and women throughout our area would work anytime they were called to provide for their families, even on holidays and especially during these difficult economic times."

Lansingburgh School Superintendent George Goodwin was in attendance at the meeting to discuss the impact of the state budget on his school district. McDonald started his education in the Lansingburgh school system.

"We certainly appreciate Senator McDonald extending himself to us so we can share our concerns on the impact of state decisions on our school district and communities. It is also a welcome opportunity to have a discussion regarding ideas for ways to lessen the impact of state funding cuts through things such as mandate relief. We look forward to a continued conversation that he has suggested on a regular and ongoing basis."

Peter Aust, President and CEO of the Southern Saratoga Chamber of Commerce had the following insight on the round table discussion:

"We applaud the Senator for reaching out to community and business leaders to ascertain the important issues such as the budget and legislative priorities. We were pleased to outline our concerns and ideas regarding empire zones, health care prior approval, and the GLOBALFOUNDRIES project and its impact on our regional economy."

McDonald held two public hearings on the budget in Rensselaer and Saratoga Counties in March to give community members the opportunity to express their ideas and concerns on the budget. Today's round table discussion with community leaders is the first in a series of round table events McDonald plans to hold in his district.

Also attending the meeting were; Troy Mayor Harry Tutunjian and his comptroller, Northeast Health President and CEO, Dr. James Reed, Brunswick Supervisor Phil Herrington, Southern Saratoga Chamber of Commerce President Peter Aust, Rensselaer County Legislator Lou Desso, Malta Town Councilman John Hartzel, Saratoga County Deputy Administrator Spencer Hellwig Former Rensselaer County ARC Executive Director Jim Flannigan, and representatives of Saratoga Hospital.

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