



NEW YORK STATE SENATOR

James L. Seward

Release State Funds - Get Construction Jobs Moving

JAMES L. SEWARD April 8, 2010

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ONEONTA, 04/08/10 – State Senator James L. Seward (R/C/I-Oneonta) says the late state budget is now jeopardizing thousands of jobs and putting public safety at risk.

“The lack of urgency shown by some in Albany to set to work on a state budget is now sending individuals to the unemployment line,” said Senator Seward. **“We need to start public conference committees immediately and complete a state budget to avoid a total state shut down.”**

Along with pressing for ramped up budget work, Senator Seward is also calling on the governor to reverse his recent decision to suspend payments for ongoing state-funded capital construction projects until a new state budget is in place.

“Construction companies across upstate New York have been forced to lay off hundreds of hardworking individuals because the state isn’t meeting its obligations,” Seward continued. **“This endangers critical infrastructure improvements and leaves families in a precarious financial position.”**

After receiving correspondence from multiple construction companies within the 51st senate district, Senator Seward spoke directly with Governor Paterson urging him to release state funding for already approved construction projects.

“While I understand that the governor is trying to bring parties to the budget negotiating table, holding construction jobs hostage and penalizing innocent families is the wrong method. New York is faced with a very short construction season, delaying work jeopardizes the safety of our roads and bridges along with threatening the livelihood of many upstate residents,” Seward added.

Since April 2008, the state has lost nearly 322,000 jobs. In February 2010, the state’s unemployment rate held steady at 8.8 percent. The construction industry has been one of the hardest hit areas, as New York lost 33,400 construction jobs between February 2009 and February 2010, according to the state’s labor department.

“The state budget delay has a human face, and the construction layoffs are just the start. We need to move forward now with open, bipartisan conference committees and complete work on a state budget that says no to new taxes and yes to spending cuts, property tax relief and economic development,” Seward concluded.