NEW YORK STATE SENATOR

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A New Year for New York State: Critical Steps Needed for Economic Renewal of the Empire State

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| ISSUE: **ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT**

New York State is facing the most difficult of times. Every single day, New York is losing businesses and jobs to more job-friendly states. The new year, new Governor and new Senate Leadership in our State government brings with it real opportunity for change. It's time to take firm and decisive action to turn our State around.

The states that encourage business and job growth will be the states that will succeed in the next decade. I am committed to making the changes necessary to change the direction of our State and to renew hope and prosperity for all New Yorkers.   My immediate priorities

for New York State in 2011 are:

CUT SPENDING:

New York cannot continue to spend as it has in the past. During one of the worst recessions in our Nation's history, New York City legislators forced through two state budgets that increased spending by more than 12.5%. We must simply cut spending, and no agency or program should be immune from a thorough review and analysis.

PROPERTY TAX RELIEF:

Soaring school and local government property taxes are suffocating property owners. I will work aggressively to enact a property tax cap with corresponding mandate relief that would limit property tax increases to 2 percent or less- the same cap that brought Massachusetts from having the 3rd highest property taxes in the Nation down to the 33rd highest.

REPEAL TAXES THAT DIRECTLY IMPACT FAMILY BUDGETS:

Spiraling tax increases over the past two years have cost the average family of four nearly $5,000 in new taxes and fees. These outrageous taxes must be rolled back.

ECONOMIC RECOVERY PLAN:

New York must take the steps necessary to bring jobs back and encourage businesses to stay, grow, and prosper right here in our local communities, region and state. Providing tax incentives for private-sector businesses, and especially small businesses, would help create the jobs necessary for New York's economic recovery and would be a good first step. We must also implement a business tax moratorium and reduce the amount of red tape that are forced upon

businesses by government.

MANDATE RELIEF:

Unfunded mandates from Albany unfairly pass additional costs on local taxpayers. These

unfunded mandates must stop.

MEDICAID REFORM:

New York taxpayers pay more for Medicaid than any other state. In fact, we pay more than North Carolina, Texas and Florida combined, and twice as much per person than

California! As a member of the Legislative Task Force on Medicaid Reform, I am working to find common sense solutions to eliminate billions of dollars in waste, while preserving critical services for those truly in need.

EMPOWER NEW YORK TAXPAYERS:

We must have open, transparent budget negotiations and bipartisan conference committees

in order to create timely and responsible budgets. All budget negotiations must provide for

input from the taxpayers of New York.

We need only look to the example of our neighbor the State of New Jersey and its Governor, Chris Christie, to see how we can change the direction of our State and create a brighter future. Despite New Jersey's massive deficit, Governor Christie was adamant that the budget could not be balanced with job-killing tax hikes- and he delivered on his promise - no tax hikes, borrowing or short-term fiscal gimmicks! Governor Christie has also reformed New Jersey's crushing property tax burden, enacting a law to cap property taxes at 2%.

The time is right. The time is now. By cutting spending, reducing taxes and focusing on ways to allow our businesses to grow, we can return New York to its rightful status as the Empire State and a place where people will want to live, work and raise a family. Working together, upstate and downstate, Republican and Democrat, we can revive our economy, restore the Empire State, and make 2011 a genuinely happy new year.