



NEW YORK STATE SENATOR

Catharine Young

Column: Changing the Direction of the State

CATHARINE YOUNG March 31, 2011

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The recently approved State budget illustrates the new way New York State government is getting positive results. Having joined with Governor Cuomo, and hardworking taxpayers from across our State, I am proud to say that this year the Senate stopped the vicious cycle of raising taxes to pay for unrestrained spending.

Doing more with less, tightening belts and cutting wasteful spending is what many families throughout New York have had to do during these challenging economic times. At last, this common sense approach has been used when it comes to State government.

The new budget, which I worked hard to ensure was passed on time this year, includes a number of important reforms that reflect major changes. Perhaps most importantly, I believe this fiscally-responsible plan keeps a commitment I made to you last year – no new taxes, cutting government waste, and reducing spending.

Among the key components are:

A Balanced Budget – Without Tax Increases: The new State budget eliminated a \$10 billion deficit without new tax increases.

A Budget That Will Help To Create Private-Sector Jobs: The budget phases out a multi-billion tax that previously was imposed on thousands of small businesses across the State. This tax relief will strengthen the economy and create new jobs in our community.

A Budget That Ensures A Fair Share For Our Local Schools: To make sure that regions did not get shortchanged, the Senate led a successful fight to deliver millions of dollars in additional funding for our local schools.

A Budget That Protects Property Taxpayers: The Senate successfully eliminated a number of proposed cost shifts that would have placed significant new burdens on local property taxpayers throughout the State. I will continue to work on a comprehensive mandate relief bill to help other levels of government reduce their costs and protect local taxpayers. In addition, I will work with the Assembly to help them pass the historic property tax cap – a measure already approved in the Senate.

A Budget That Controls Spending: By reforming New York's costly Medicaid system, and restraining growth in many government agencies and programs, this year's State budget will keep overall spending growth below the rate of inflation. In fact, for the first time in more than 15 years, the new State budget will actually spend less than the previous year.

This budget is a big step forward toward getting people back to work, reducing out-of-control taxes and spending, and developing career opportunities so that our young people don't have to leave after they graduate. I will continue to do all I can to turn our State around so we have a brighter future.

Getting the budget done is the first milestone in making government work for you. During the remainder of the Legislative Session, I will continue to address the issues that matter most to our communities – property tax relief, new jobs, and a stronger economy.