



NEW YORK STATE SENATOR

Charles J. Fuschillo Jr.

## Senator Fuschillo: Tax Cuts and Property Tax Cap Highlight New Laws Taking Effect January 1st

CHARLES J. FUSCHILLO JR. December 23, 2011

Senator Charles J. Fuschillo, Jr. (R-Merrick) is informing residents that middle-class tax cuts and a property tax cap are among the new laws taking effect on January 1, 2012. Also among the new laws are new roadway safety measures, improved coverage for cancer treatments, and new protections to prevent underage smoking.

The laws taking effect on January 1st include:

**Tax-cuts for Middle Class Families**- The recently enacted tax cuts delivered \$690 million in personal income tax relief for over 4.4 million taxpayers, allowing them to keep more of their hard-earned money. Middle-class taxpayers will see the lowest tax rates in 50 years and no New York State resident will see an increase in the income tax rate they are currently paying.

**Property Tax Cap**- January 1st also marks the effective date of New York State's property tax cap, which will help control local spending by capping property tax levies.

The property tax cap law will cap spending for school districts and local governments. Under the law, all local tax levy increases will be capped at either two percent or the annual increase in the consumer price index, whichever is less. Voters will still have the opportunity to vote for their school district's tax levy proposal in May. Districts cannot go above the cap

unless they receive the approval of 60 percent of the voters in the budget vote.

**New Roadway Safety Measures** – Starting January 1st, drivers will be required to exercise additional caution when approaching, overtaking or passing any hazard vehicle, just as they must currently do when approaching or passing an emergency vehicle on the side of the road. The new law provides an extra measure of safety for drivers and workers on the roadside who are performing such activities as helping a stranded or broken-down vehicle, snow removal, or other types of roadway maintenance and construction. Drivers who break the law face a penalty of two points on their driver's license and a fine.

**Orally Administered Chemotherapy Coverage** -- As of January 1, 2012, health insurance plans in New York State must provide the same coverage level for oral chemotherapy as intravenous chemotherapy. The law corrects an inequity which allows insurance companies to classify oral chemotherapy as a prescription drug rather than a major medical benefit like traditional chemotherapy, which often prevents cancer patients from utilizing it because of the high out of pocket cost. Oral chemotherapy greatly improves patients' quality of life, as they can get treatment in the comfort of their own home without having to continually go to a hospital for intravenous treatments.

**New Youth Anti-Smoking Measures** – Businesses will be prohibited from selling hookahs, water pipes, and shisha to minors. "Shisha" is any product made primarily of tobacco smoked or intended to be smoked in a hookah or water pipe.

Senator Fuschillo supported each of the new laws in the Senate.