



NEW YORK STATE SENATOR

Andrew J. Lanza

State of the State: A New Session Brings New Opportunities

ANDREW J LANZA January 9, 2013

Governor Andrew Cuomo has just delivered his State of the State Message, helping to mark the official opening of the 2013 Legislative Session.

For my part, I will be working hard to ensure that the 2013 Session is as successful and productive as possible -- delivering real accomplishments, real progress and real results for the hardworking taxpayers on Staten Island and across New York.

Working together with Governor Cuomo over the past two years, we've made substantial progress on a number of fronts. We've passed two early budgets and cut taxes -- choosing fiscal responsibility over fiscal gimmicks. We also reduced tax rates on middle class New Yorkers to the lowest level in over 50 years, reduced Port Authority bridge tolls for Staten Islanders, passed historic legislation to make New York state a leader in fighting prescription drug abuse and expanded the DNA databank.

But despite all of this progress, there is more to be done, and more challenges to overcome.

After closing two budget deficits that totaled more than \$13 billion, we must now close a \$1 billion gap -- without raising taxes. In order to turn these deficits into a surplus, we must control spending and make our government more cost-effective.

We also must do more to help businesses grow and create new jobs. In the past two years, New York added more than 210,000 new private sector jobs -- that's 210,000 people who can make a better life for themselves and their families, and can contribute to their communities and our economy. This year, we must build on this record and create even more jobs.

Ensuring public safety is also a primary responsibility of government. We were all shocked and saddened by the tragedy in Newtown, Connecticut. To protect the safety of New Yorkers, I believe we must pursue thoughtful and meaningful policies that will help to ensure greater public safety in our schools and local communities.

This year, we're also moving forward with a new and more effective way to run the New York State Senate. The chamber will be run by a coalition of Democrats and Republicans who will work together to

get things done. This coalition is a natural extension of the partnership we've built over the last two years, that enabled us to put New York back on the right track.

As the 2013 Legislative Session now moves forward, you can rest assured that I will be fighting hard each and every day for you... for your family... and for our community.