



NEW YORK STATE SENATOR

George D. Maziarz

1 in 3 Niagara County residents has not yet registered for Basic STAR

GEORGE D. MAZIARZ November 7, 2013

| ISSUE: **STAR (SCHOOL TAX RELIEF PROGRAM)**

Senator George D. Maziarz and Assemblyman John Ceretto today urged Basic STAR recipients to re-register for the popular school tax savings program in order to continue receiving benefits.

The one-time re-registration requirement for the Basic STAR program was included in the 2013-2014 state budget as a means of eliminating fraud and abuse among recipients. The registration deadline is December 31, 2013 in order to continue receiving the exemption in 2014 and thereafter.

The state legislators also announced that as of November 4, 2013, one-third of Basic STAR recipients in Niagara County (67%) have not yet re-registered.

"We don't want a single homeowner to miss out on this important savings on their school tax bill," Senator Maziarz said. "We are doing all we can to publicly urge Basic STAR recipients to re-register because there are almost 15,000 recipients in Niagara County alone who still haven't done so yet."

Assemblyman Ceretto said, "The average homeowner saves \$700 per year thanks to Basic STAR, and that savings is critical to many families who are trying to make ends meet. We don't want these families hit with a much higher tax bill next year."

There are several ways eligible homeowners can re-register:

- *Online.* Visit www.tax.ny.gov.
- *Over the phone.* Call (518) 457-2036.
- *In person.* NYS Tax Department representatives will be at the Niagara Falls DMV office (1001 11th Street) this Friday, November 8, from 9:00 AM to 4:00 PM. A similar event is being planned for the Lockport DMV office in the near future.

To re-register, homeowners will need the personalized STAR Code that was mailed to them earlier this fall by the State Tax Department. If the letter containing the code was misplaced, homeowners can still re-register by answering several property-specific questions through the various points of contact listed above.

Senior citizens receiving an Enhanced STAR exemption are not required to re-register.

According to the NYS Tax Department, as of November 4th the following percentages of Basic STAR recipients have not re-registered to continue receiving the exemption:

City of Lockport – 30%

City of Niagara Falls – 40%

City of North Tonawanda – 31%

Town of Cambria – 32%

Town of Hartland – 34%

Town of Lewiston – 32%

Town of Lockport – 30%

Town of Newfane – 31%

Town of Niagara – 39%

Town of Pendleton – 30%

Town of Porter – 33%

Town of Royalton – 33%

Town of Somerset – 38%

Town of Wheatfield – 28%

Town of Wilson – 33%

All Niagara County – 33%

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