



NEW YORK STATE SENATOR

Michael H. Ranzenhofer

Monthly Column: 2015 Constituent Questionnaire Results

MICHAEL H. RANZENHOFER June 16, 2015

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Look for...

Senator Mike Ranzenhofer's
Monthly Column

...In your local newspaper
the third week of every month

By: Michael H. Ranzenhofer

As your State Senator, your views are important to me; your input helps me to best represent you, your family and our community. Earlier this year, I offered residents an opportunity to share their opinions with me in a 2015 Constituent Questionnaire.

The 2015 Constituent Questionnaire collected input on a number of important legislative issues, including New York's economy, Common Core, minimum wage, and more. Thousands of residents, all across the 61st Senate District, filled out the 14-question survey either by mail, via Facebook or at my website.

The results of the questionnaire have been compiled, and I would like to share some of the figures with you:

- Eighty-four percent of respondents opposed the New York Dream Act, a bill introduced by several downstate legislators to allow undocumented, illegal immigrants to receive state financial aid.
- Only eight percent characterized New York State's economy as poor.
- Over fifty percent are satisfied with the quality of our local public schools.
- Forty-seven percent oppose increasing the minimum wage for a third time.

A complete summary of results has been posted on my website, ranzenhofer.nysenate.gov. I encourage residents to visit my website to check out the results for each of the 14 questions.

The responses for two particular questions were overwhelming. Three out of every four residents expressed their support for making the property tax cap permanent, and seventy-eight percent of residents strongly support the STAR and Enhanced STAR programs.

It is important to note that property tax relief continues to be, as it always has been, one of my highest priorities. I will continue to lead the fight to provide more relief for property taxpayers, since there is more work to be done on this issue.

Recently, I voted to approve a bill that will make the property tax cap permanent. The State Senate has taken action to keep the cap to ensure that we never return to the days of skyrocketing budgets and spiraling tax increases. If the State Assembly doesn't take action, the property tax cap will expire.

While the property tax cap hasn't solved all of our problems, it has helped to encourage fiscal discipline and keeping a lid on tax increases. In fact, according to a recent study, taxpayers have saved more than \$7.6 billion since the cap was first enacted four years ago. In 2015-16 alone, homeowners are expected to save a total of \$3.3 billion in school taxes.

Making the property tax cap permanent remains one of my top priorities. Simply put, we cannot afford to let the tax cap expire. By working together, we can get the State Assembly to join with us in protecting and extending the property tax cap without delay!

Senator Ranzenhofer's monthly column appeared in the Amherst and Clarence Bees on June 17th.