



NEW YORK STATE SENATOR

Michael F. Nozzolio

## SENATOR NOZZOLIO CRITICIZES GOVERNOR PATERSON FOR IRRESPONSIBLE, SECRET WELFARE GIVEAWAY PLAN

MICHAEL F. NOZZOLIO August 9, 2009

State Senator Mike Nozzolio today condemned Governor Paterson's plan to spend \$140 million in federal stimulus funds on a massive welfare giveaway. The Governor's so-called "back to school" public assistance plan gives a \$200 cash award for every child receiving welfare or food stamp assistance. The cash awards come without any kind of restrictions on use or any verification process to insure that the money was spent on its intended purpose.

"This is an outrageously irresponsible use of our federal stimulus money, especially when New York State is facing a \$2.1 billion budget deficit and Upstate New Yorkers are struggling with \$8.5 billion in new taxes and fees imposed by Governor Paterson and his New York City- driven budget." Senator Nozzolio said. "Federal Stimulus funds should be used to create jobs and to help our local economy. We should restore the STAR rebate program and roll back the over 100 new taxes and fees that were added in the last state budget."

Senator Nozzolio voted against every one of the tax increases when they came before the New York State Senate. **Unfortunately, the budget amendments were enacted by ONE VOTE!** In addition, public assistance benefits were increased by 10 percent and will increase by 30 percent over the next two years.

This new welfare giveaway program was detailed in a secret memo from the Office of Temporary Disability Assistance. The grants will be given out regardless of whether a welfare recipient has complied with work or other mandatory requirements; and regardless of whether a child is enrolled in school, attending school or has even dropped out. The grants will be disbursed at ATMs – with no requirements, no accountability, and no legislative oversight!

"The Governor kept this new giveaway plan a secret to avoid public disclosure and to make sure that taxpayers wouldn't know about the plan until it was too late," Senator Nozzolio said. "This is free money available at ATMs, a plan that is ripe for

fraud and abuse. There is absolutely no guarantee that the money will be spent as intended."

"My Senate colleagues and I pushed for and enacted serious welfare reform laws to ensure accountability, encourage personal and parental responsibility, and reduce fraud and abuse in the system," Senator Nozzolio continued. "As a result of those changes, welfare costs across the state decreased. I am now calling on Governor Paterson to rescind his misguided and ill-advised new plan before New York State takes another major step backwards and taxpayers are saddled with the cost of an irresponsible government spending program."

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