



NEW YORK STATE SENATOR

Catharine Young

## Senate Begins 2016 with Focus on Important Issues Before the State

CATHARINE YOUNG January 12, 2016

| ISSUE: **EDUCATION, STATE SPENDING, ETHICS REFORM**

ALBANY – The State Senate used the first week of the 2016 Legislative Session to quickly and decisively address some of most serious issues before the state.

Senator Catharine Young (R,C,I- 57th District) and her colleagues first passed legislation ( [S6377](#)) co-sponsored by Senator Young that would completely get rid of the Gap Elimination Adjustment (GEA), a fiscal gimmick that has devastated area schools and robbed children of learning opportunities. The GEA was first imposed in 2010 by former Governor Paterson and the Democrats who controlled the Senate and Assembly. At the time, Senator Young and all the members of the Republican Conference voted against the plan because it disproportionately impacted children in poor and rural school systems outside of New York City.

“All of my schools agreed that the GEA had to go. Last year, the GEA was nearly eradicated for schools in my district, with 94.6 percent eliminated. It was a positive, monumental development that the Senate delivered on behalf of our kids, and now we are using that momentum to eliminate the GEA once-and-for-all – for every school in our state,” said Senator Young.

The Senate also passed legislation ([S5507](#)) that would cap state spending to a three-year rolling average of inflation, providing hardworking taxpayers with relief from out-of-control property tax increases. If enacted, when the actual and projected rates of inflation are applied, New Yorkers would expect to save about \$12.8 billion for Fiscal Years 2017 through 2019.

“Our local municipalities and school districts live within a cap and now it’s time for state government to live by these same rules. We’ve done a great job over the past few years keeping spending in check and delivering on-time budgets, but these limits have only been self-imposed. Making the spending cap permanent is the only way to permanently ensure continued fiscal discipline,” said Senator Young.

Finally, the Senate passed legislation ([S2722B](#)) that would limit legislative leaders and committee chairs to serving no more than eight years in their respective position. The Senate voluntarily implemented leadership term limits in 2009 as part of the rules governing the Senate. Adoption of the measure that passed today would make them permanent in law for both the Senate and Assembly.

“The Republican Senate Majority is once again leading by example in taking steps to help restore the public’s trust in its state government. The public has made clear they expect the best from their elected officials. Term limits for legislative leaders and committee chairs ensure that no one person becomes too powerful, and encourage fresh blood and new ideas. Unfortunately, the Assembly has yet to pass this initiative. It's a great reform that should get done,” she said.

All three bills have now been sent to the Assembly for action.