



NEW YORK STATE SENATOR

James L. Seward

Seward Advocacy Gets Results

JEFF BISHOP, COMMUNICATIONS DIRECTOR March 28, 2016

| ISSUE: **INCOME TAX**

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ONEONTA, 03/28/16 -- State Senator James L. Seward (R/C/I – Oneonta) today encouraged eligible taxpayers to take advantage of free tax preparation assistance in Oneonta on April 6, 2016.

“Earlier this year I learned of several free state-sponsored tax assistance sessions taking place around the state, though unfortunately, a great many regions were left unserved,” said Senator

Seward. **“After I called attention to this omission the State Department of Taxation and Finance worked to develop an alternative plan to expand their service area.”**

The Department of Financial Services’ Mobile Command Center will be deployed to help eligible New Yorkers prepare and file their taxes for free. The unit will be making stops at locations throughout Upstate New York from April 4 through April 9, including Oneonta on Wednesday, April 6 from noon to 6:00 p.m. at Foothills Performing Arts Center.

In January, Senator Seward wrote to State Department of Taxation and Finance Commissioner Jerry Boone to point out a lack of geographic diversity in the department’s free tax assistance program. In response, officials with the department arranged to send Tax Department volunteers to several other communities with the Mobile Command Center.

“While I understand there are logistical concerns and limitations to the Tax Department’s free program, I found the lack of assistance in rural areas of the state strikingly unfair. I appreciate the response from Commissioner Boone and encourage individuals still in need of tax filing assistance to make use of this opportunity,” added Seward.

Taxpayers with federal adjusted gross incomes under \$62,000 can receive assistance with both their federal and state income tax returns. The full mobile command center schedule is:

- April 4 – Jamestown;
- April 5 – Alfred;
- April 6 – Oneonta;
- April 8 – Watertown;
- April 9 – Plattsburgh.

“I am hopeful that this valuable tax assistance service will be further expanded in future years to include more rural areas of the state where Internet service is scarce, and many income eligible individuals reside. I will certainly be keeping a close eye on the program next year,” Seward concluded.

Additional information is available on the Tax Department’s website at <https://www.tax.ny.gov/fsa/default.htm>.