



NEW YORK STATE SENATOR

Chris Jacobs

Jacobs Calls on Legislative Leaders to Restore VLT Aid in Final Budget

SENATOR JACOBS March 4, 2020

| ISSUE: **2020 NEW YORK STATE BUDGET, VIDEO LOTTERY TERMINAL AID**



(Albany, NY) – State Senator Chris Jacobs today formally called on the leadership of the New York State Senate to support his call for the restoration of \$9 million in Video Lottery Terminal (VLT) Aid in the final state budget. In a letter to Majority Leader Andrea Stewart-Cousins and Minority Leader John Flanagan, Jacobs called Governor Cuomo’s proposal to withhold the revenue traditionally paid to municipalities who host video gaming facilities “another unnecessary assault as the Governor seeks to balance the state budget on the backs

of our partners in local government.”

Jacobs informed the Senate leaders that if Cuomo’s plan is approved the Town of Hamburg stands to lose more than \$865,000. VLT Aid represents the town’s second largest revenue stream, and if the money is not restored Hamburg officials will be faced with eliminating jobs, cutting vital services or raising property taxes an astonishing 9.65%. Similarly, Erie County would lose \$288,000 in revenue, a sharp blow, particularly against the backdrop of the Governor’s efforts to close a \$6 billion deficit by passing additional Medicaid costs down to county governments.

“The Governor has a huge budget deficit due largely to bad decisions he has made with New York’s Medicaid program,” said Jacobs. “Instead of fixing the mess he created, he’s now trying to balance the state budget on the backs of local communities and local taxpayers, and that is simply wrong.”

Jacobs noted that local governments have faced a series of financial burdens at the hands of the Cuomo administration in recent years. Last year the Governor severely hurt towns and villages, particularly those in upstate and Western New York, by depriving them of critical resources through elimination of the Aid and Incentives to Municipalities program, more commonly known as AIM funding. He called this year’s proposal for the state to keep the VLT funding another unnecessary attack on local governments.

“The state’s insistence on refusing to meet its obligations to our local government partners and this administration’s refusal to be transparent with budget proposals is extremely troubling and has contributed to the deficit we now face,” said Jacobs. “That is why I am asking the leadership in the Senate to join me in sending a strong message to the Governor that we must stop these fiscal assaults on local governments. The legislature must establish spending priorities that show fiscal restraint instead of shifting costs to already

overburdened local taxpayers,” the Senator concluded.

The deadline for approval of a new state budget is March 31st.