



NEW YORK STATE SENATOR

Thomas F. O'Mara

O'Mara: Priorities of NYS government cannot focus on out-of-control spending

THOMAS F. O'MARA January 5, 2022

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The loudest alarm throughout the past decade is that New York State remains one of America's highest-taxed, most expensive, most debt-ridden and overregulated states.

State Senator Tom O'Mara (R,C,I-Big Flats) responded to Governor Kathy Hochul's inaugural State of the State message to the Legislature today by warning that state leaders could be eyeing long-term plans for higher and higher state spending that, in the long run, will require higher and higher taxes, more state borrowing, and an unsustainable debt burden for future generations of state and local taxpayers.

O'Mara cautioned that the vision that Hochul and legislative leaders are laying out for the future of New York could spell even harder times ahead for state and local taxpayers, small businesses and manufacturers, and already hard-pressed upstate communities, economies, and workers.

O'Mara said, "State government is still largely being driven by Hochul executive order and that needs to end as soon as possible. First and foremost, the Legislature needs to reclaim its decision-making authority for this critical legislative session ahead of us. I have stressed throughout the COVID-19 response over the past two years that we need an open and full discussion on the best ways to move forward for this entire state, upstate and downstate. It requires a restructuring of New York government, strengthening the state-local partnership, and getting to work rebuilding New York with the right priorities and long-overdue commonsense reforms, especially fiscal responsibility. Right now what I'm hearing from Governor Hochul and legislative leaders is setting the stage for an ongoing spending spree in the years ahead. That's going to demand more and more revenue, including higher taxes and more borrowing."

O'Mara added that he looks forward to joining his Senate Republican colleagues throughout the new legislative session to put forth strategies to ensure that upstate regions don't get left behind.

"The loudest alarm throughout the past decade is that New York State remains one of America's highest-taxed, most expensive, most debt-ridden and overregulated states -- with one of the worst business-friendly climates

in the nation to boot,” O’Mara said. “Even after the hard road we’ve all been on, it’s mind-boggling that the governor and top legislative Democrats can still keep talking about bigger and bigger state government spending. One-party control of state government has already produced billions of dollars of short- and long-term spending requiring billions of dollars in new taxes, fees, and borrowing for future generations of state and local taxpayers. The short-term pursuit of their hard-left, extreme-liberal political agenda appears to be the priority over a long-term, sustainable future for upstate, middle-class communities, families, workers, and taxpayers.”

O’Mara and his Republican colleagues want to begin setting rebuilding priorities for post-coronavirus government in New York throughout the coming year and into the foreseeable future.

They are discussing and developing strategies for upstate’s post-coronavirus communities and economies focusing on several cornerstones including the steady reopening and rebuilding of increasing numbers of economic sectors, regulatory and tax reform, and mandate relief, among others.

O’Mara said, “New York remains one of the highest-taxed states in America. We are one of the most overregulated states in the nation. Our local governments and local property taxpayers continue to foot the bill for one of the country’s heaviest burdens of unfunded state mandates. Still, the so-called progressive vision does not emphasize broad-based, lower taxes for workers and employers. Nothing about the pitfalls of overregulation or the drain of unfunded state mandates on counties and local property taxpayers. What about the high cost of living that is driving people, especially young people, out of Upstate New York?”

O’Mara said that he would keep working with his legislative colleagues across the Southern Tier and Finger Lakes regions to keep attention focused on unfunded state mandates, job-killing state regulations, and a state and local tax burden that hurts family budgets and keeps New York’s business climate one of the worst in the nation.

The next key benchmark arrives later this month when Hochul begins rolling out her 2022-2023 state budget proposal.

O’Mara will continue to serve as the Ranking Republican member of the Senate Finance Committee.