



NEW YORK STATE SENATOR

James Tedisco

## Tedisco on State of the State: NY Needs Agenda Change to Stop Population Loss

JAMES TEDISCO January 10, 2023

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*Statement from Senator Jim Tedisco (R,C-44<sup>th</sup> Senate District)*

“New York is a beautiful state with wonderful people and resources. However, if the Governor is being honest, the state of our state in terms of our economy and sense of public safety is fragile. Clearly, our state needs a major course correction in its agenda because people are voting with their feet and escaping from New York in droves with over half-a-million fleeing over the past two years. Even the Governor has recently acknowledged this fact.”

“It doesn’t have to be this way. Our state desperately needs an agenda change to keep people safe in our communities and provide incentives for people to get a good-paying job, grow their families here, find a home and then stay and retire in the Empire State. The Governor and my colleagues in the Majority need to resolve to do that this year before we lose another half million of our best and brightest citizens to other, more taxpayer-friendly states.”

“When those who can afford to leave are gone, who will be left to pay for New York’s \$220+ billion state budget? The over-burdened middle class and working-class taxpayers.”

“Here’s six solutions that have bi-partisan support to turn New York around so the Empire State doesn’t become the Empty State:

1. The most important job of government is to ensure public safety. People do not feel safe with our crime epidemic taking place. That can change by passing my bi-partisan legislation I’m sponsoring with Assemblyman Angelo Santabarbara to repeal the cash bail law and give judges discretion (Senate Bill S.905).
2. There’s no question a Thruway toll hike will lead to higher consumer prices and a significant, negative impact on local communities and local roads in terms of safety and wear and tear as more cars and trucks will drive on municipal roads to avoid the tolls. I’m sponsoring a bill to require legislative ratification for any toll increase and take the power away from unaccountable faceless bureaucrats (S.173).
3. They say the only certainties in life are “death and taxes” and in New York you can be certain that homeowners are buried in high taxes. While we’ve made some progress in containing property tax increases with the property tax cap, there’s much more that needs to be done to ease New York’s highest in the nation tax burden so another half-a-million New Yorkers don’t pack up and leave the state. My “Two-Star” legislation can help homeowners double their basic STAR benefits, and for some seniors, end New York’s tax eternity by eliminating school property taxes for residents into their senior years (S.8653).
4. With inflation at its highest level in over 40 years, the legislature passed a 16-cent gas tax suspension that expired on December 31<sup>st</sup>. I’m sponsoring S.8728 to make the suspension permanent and start to cap the state gas tax at \$2.25 per gallon and suspend it fully at \$3.00 per gallon in perpetuity or until it goes back below \$3.00.

5. When in New York is a victim impact statement only a “victim statement” without any possibility of creating an impact? The answer is when those state parole commissioners who are interviewing the inmate that’s up for parole never see it! No one understands this more than the families of the late Shenendehowa students Christopher Stewart and Deanna Rivers who were tragically killed 10 years ago by a drunk, drugged, and dangerous driver. That’s why I am sponsoring “Christopher and Deanna’s Law” S.2046, that requires all victim impact statements be video recorded if victims choose to and mandates all state Parole Board members who vote on parole for an offender, must watch the videos before making their decision.

6. If your child was bullied in school, wouldn’t you want to know? That’s the question, I’ve asked scores of parents, education officials and my colleagues over the past few years and not a single person has said, “no, I’d rather not know.” Unfortunately, due to a loophole in state law, many parents are not being kept informed about incidents of bullying taking place at our schools. The parents of the late, 13-year-old Jacobe Taras, of Moreau say they were not notified of the extent of bullying he faced. This was not an isolated incident as there are many heartbreaking stories of young people injuring themselves, or worse yet, taking their own lives because of bullying. “Jacob’s Law” requires parental notification if a child is bullied (S.44).

These six solutions are a good start but just a partial list of reasonable proposals that have bi-partisan support to begin to turn things around for residents in New York and to encourage people not to leave the state and attract more people to come here.

The Governor and legislative majority leaders can continue to bury their heads in the sand and keep advancing the same failed agenda that got us into this mess, or they can start to join those of us who are saying, ‘enough is enough’ and sincerely work to deliver real change in the New Year.”

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