



COMMITMENT
to
NEW YORK TAXPAYERS:
from
Senator Mike Nozzolio

As your representative in the New York State Senate, I am dedicated to changing the policies and direction of New York State, and restoring the bonds of trust between the people and their elected representatives. In this era of tremendous economic uncertainty, I offer the following as a specific and detailed agenda for the economic renewal of the Empire State, a written commitment with no fine print.

NO NEW TAXES: New York State has the dubious distinction of having the heaviest tax burden of any state in the nation. Those who currently control our State government in Albany have **increased taxes by an astounding \$13 billion during the past two years**, suffocating families and senior citizens and driving out people and jobs. I have consistently opposed and voted against new taxes. Destructive tax hikes must be stopped so that we can make our state a more affordable place to live and work.

***ACTION:** I voted against all new taxes included in both the 2009 and 2010 budgets.*

CONSTITUTIONALLY-REQUIRED STATE SPENDING CAP: Out-of-control spending and taxes over the past two years have worsened the state's fiscal crisis and hampered our economic recovery. A state spending cap that **would prevent spending increases**, would restore fiscal accountability and force Albany to live under the same budget constraints as families and businesses.

***ACTION:** I am sponsoring legislation (S.5916) which will cap the growth of state spending and increase the allowable reserve of the rainy day fund.*

PROPERTY TAX CAP AND PROPERTY TAX RELIEF: Soaring school and local government property taxes are suffocating homeowners. A property tax cap would limit property tax increases to 2 percent or less, based on the Consumer Price Index. This plan is similar to caps enacted in New Jersey and Massachusetts. **After the cap was established in Massachusetts, the state went from having the 3rd highest property taxes in the nation down to the 33rd highest.**

If people spend less on property taxes, they have more money to put into the economy, helping to create jobs and economic vitality. **My plan restores the STAR property tax Rebate program and provides a rebate check to every homeowner eligible for the basic and enhanced STAR program.** It enables senior citizens over age 70 to have their school district tax rates frozen at current levels. It also allows homeowners to choose between the STAR rebate check or a residential property tax circuit breaker credit based on gross household income -- whichever option provides the most tax relief.

***ACTION:** On August 3rd, 2010, I co-sponsored an amendment to Senate Bill S.67005 that would cap property taxes at 2.5 percent. The amendment was rejected by all 32 Senate Democrats and lost by just one vote. Additionally, I am co-sponsoring two measures: S.5248-A, which would restore the STAR property tax Rebate program, and S.2778, which would enable senior citizens over age 70 to have their school district tax rates frozen at current levels.*

REPEAL TAXES THAT DIRECTLY IMPACT FAMILY BUDGETS: Spiraling tax increases over the past two years have severely strained family budgets, costing the average family of four nearly \$5,000 in new taxes and fees. Clothing, utility bills, health insurance, child care, college tuition, driver's license fees and registrations -- the list goes on and on --- all have been taxed more...and cost you more. **These outrageous taxes must be rolled back.**

***ACTION:** I am sponsoring legislation, (S.6132) to remove the 2% tax assessment on utilities which was adopted in the 2009 budget. On April 3, 2009, I also sponsored an amendment to S.59B (Transportation, Economic Development & Environmental Conservation budget bill) to repeal the utility tax and an amendment to S.58B (2009 Health budget bill) to repeal the health care tax. These amendments lost by one vote (31-30). I also sponsored an amendment to section Z-1 of S.57B (2009 Education, Labor and Family Assistance budget bill) to repeal the personal income tax increase. This measure was defeated by the Senate Democrats. Additionally, I voted against increases in taxes to vehicle registration, SUNY tuition, child care services, rental cars, transportation services and beer and wine.*

ECONOMIC RECOVERY PLAN: New York's private sector has taken a beating from the recession. More than 245,000 jobs were lost in 2009. Hundreds of businesses have closed, and markets have been lost. We need to get people back to work and have career opportunities so our young people don't have to leave to find a job. Our plan lowers the cost of doing business by providing tax relief. It creates a five-year moratorium on new taxes and fees and **eliminates the personal income tax hike that hurt over 60,000 small businesses.** It eliminates the corporate franchise tax, and rolls back job-killing taxes on utilities and health insurance plans. It also stops Albany's raid of business tax credits that should be used to incentivize job growth.

***ACTION:** I am sponsoring legislation (S.6959) that places a 5 year moratorium on any taxes and fees that impact job-creating businesses. This legislation will also eliminate the corporate franchise tax for small businesses and manufacturers over a period of two years.*

JOB CREATION TAX CREDIT: Small businesses and manufacturers would be rewarded through a tax credit for creating new jobs, or if they hire someone off of unemployment. This plan would create thousands of new jobs at no cost to the state because the withholding generated by the new jobs, and savings to unemployment, would offset the cost of the tax credit.

***ACTION:** I am sponsoring S.6959, which also establishes an average \$2,500 to \$5,000 credit to employers for every new job created. There is an additional credit of \$3,000 for hiring an individual currently receiving unemployment benefits.*

REPEAL ONEROUS BUSINESS REGULATIONS: Bureaucratic red tape impedes job growth. My plan would place a moratorium on new regulations from state agencies. It would identify and recommend ways to streamline and/or eliminate the most costly and counterproductive regulations.

***ACTION:** I am sponsoring S.6959 which creates a special Regulatory Reform Commission that will identify and make binding recommendations on eliminating costly and counter-productive regulations.*

MANDATE RELIEF FOR SCHOOLS AND LOCAL GOVERNMENTS: Expensive, countless unfunded mandates from Albany unfairly escalate local costs that are passed along to property taxpayers. These unfunded mandates must be identified and abolished, thereby reducing local tax burdens while allowing education funding to go directly into the classroom or local revenues to be used solely for service delivery. A moratorium must be placed on all new unfunded mandates.

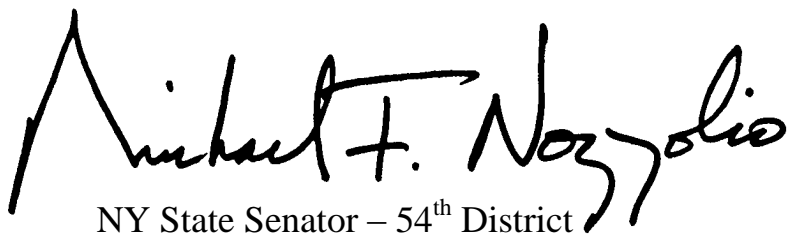
***ACTION:** In 2008, I co-sponsored legislation (S.8737) that bans unfunded mandates and creates a Blue Ribbon Commission on Mandates. The legislation was enacted by Senate but not the Assembly. In March 2010, my Senate Republican colleagues and I put forward the "Homeowner Protection and Property Tax Rebate Act" that included a ban on unfunded mandates.*

MEDICAID REFORM: New York State's Medicaid spending is the highest in the nation, 70 percent more than the national average, and exceeding Medicaid spending in Florida, Illinois and Texas combined. Medicaid costs New York State taxpayers **\$52 billion a year... \$ 1 billion per week!** Abuses such as Medicaid and welfare fraud, pile on the costs to local and state taxpayers. My reforms would aggressively fight fraud, restore accountability and integrity to the Medicaid system, and ensure that tax dollars are spent wisely to help people who really need help, not enrich those who are taking advantage of our overburdened taxpayers.

ACTION: *On June 7, 2010, I sponsored an amendment to S.8090 (emergency budget appropriation bill) to reinstate eligibility screening, face to face interviews and finger imaging to help counties determine if Medicaid recipients are truly eligible for benefits. The amendment was defeated by the Senate Democrats. I am also sponsoring legislation (S.7436) to require anyone receiving any form of public assistance to first pass a drug test. In addition, I am a co-sponsor of S.4774, which would allow district attorneys to prosecute cases of Medicaid fraud and abuse by health care providers. Currently all cases of provider fraud are referred to the State Attorney General.*

As a member of the Senate Medicaid Task Force, my task force colleagues and I have made the following recommendations in our initial report:

- *Allow localities to perform credit checks and real property searches on Medicaid applicants to prevent fraud.*
- *Empower Counties to keep more tax dollars that are lost to Medicaid fraud and waste to offset local costs and reinvest in staff and technology to fight fraud.*
- *Wherever possible, substitute less expensive generic drugs for name brands – just doing this could save taxpayers \$300 million.*
- *Require Medicaid recipients to choose a primary doctor and pharmacist, similar to managed care plans.*
- *Install a voice-activated time card system for personal care workers. This system is already in place in New York City and has saved \$1 billion in time card abuse and reduced personal care hours – putting it in place statewide could save billions.*


NY State Senator – 54th District

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