



NEW YORK STATE SENATOR

John A. DeFrancisco

Senator DeFrancisco Criticizes Governor Paterson for Following Utility Tax Hike WITH Consumer Outreach

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Senator John A. DeFrancisco (R-I-C, Syracuse) today criticized Governor David A. Paterson for announcing an outreach program for consumers who can't pay their energy bills, just days after pushing through a massive utility tax hike, which will make it even tougher for people to pay their energy bills.

"Governor Paterson and his Democrat colleagues increased taxes on electricity and natural gas by more than \$600 million, which will raise the energy bills of every consumer, and now the Governor wants people who will no longer be able to pay their bills to know their legal rights. This clearly illustrates the Governor's backwards priorities," said Senator DeFrancisco.

Senator DeFrancisco also pointed out that the Governor's utility tax hike is the only tax increase in the budget that is retroactive, and applies to bills beginning April 1,

2009.

New Yorkers already pay some of the highest energy costs in the nation, now the new utility tax will cost the average resident hundreds of dollars a year. A small manufacturer with a \$10,000 electrical bill will see this assessment go from \$333 to \$2,000 a year. This will likely lead to more businesses closing their doors and leaving New York for other states.

Senate Republicans proposed a budget amendment to strike the disastrous utility tax from the budget, but Senate Democrats voted against it unanimously, and stood with the Governor in support of the tax hike.

The new state budget increases taxes by a total of more than \$8 billion and will increase the taxes paid by an average Upstate family of four by \$2,400 a year. This includes the decision by the Governor and the Senate and Assembly Democrats to eliminate the STAR property tax rebate checks.

"Our taxpayers wouldn't even be at risk and need outreach programs if the Governor and Senate Democrats had supported the Senate Republicans' budget plan, which would have reduced spending, cut taxes and created new jobs," concluded Senator DeFrancisco.