



NEW YORK STATE SENATOR

Darrel J. Aubertine

Governor Responds to Senate Upstate Democratic Caucus Call to Release \$120 million Upstate Regional Blueprint Fund

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ALBANY (May 6, 2009)—State Sen. Darrel J. Aubertine and the Upstate Democratic Caucus applauded Gov. David A. Paterson for responding today to their call to release the \$120 million Upstate Regional Blueprint Fund available this summer for job creation in Upstate New York.

“Now more than ever we need to see serious investment in the Upstate economy and making these funds available is an important start,” said Sen. Aubertine, chair of the Senate caucus. “This fund was designed as part of the 2008-09 budget for Upstate New York, but up until now has not been used to address the region’s overwhelming needs. We called on the Governor to act and I think we can all be pleased by today’s announcement. I’m anxious to work with ESDC to address the critical needs in all of Upstate New York.”

Due to the delay, Senator Aubertine and his colleagues in the Upstate Democratic Caucus—Sens. David J. Valesky, Antoine Thompson, William Stachowski, and Neil Breslin—along with Majority Leader Malcolm A. Smith called on the Governor to open up this funding for projects in Upstate New York in a letter dated April 10, 2009.

“I am pleased that the Governor has listened to the recommendation of the Upstate Senate Democratic Caucus and released the \$120 million Upstate Regional Blueprint Fund,” said Sen. Valesky, the Senate’s Vice President Pro-Tempore. “The availability of these funds will provide an additional stimulus to our Upstate urban cores in the form of new jobs, investment in infrastructure and the creation of a more business-friendly environment.”

Today, the Governor’s resulting announcement indicated the \$120 million fund will be used to finance business investment, infrastructure upgrades and downtown redevelopment that will advance New York’s economic vitality. The fund will support projects that help provide a framework for future growth in regions with stymied development. The Blueprint Fund, which will be administered by Empire State Development (ESD), will help to attract businesses, improve commerce and revitalize local economies.

“The release of the \$120 million in Upstate Regional Blueprint Funds is great news for Western New York,” said Senator Stachowski. “These funds can now finally be used to create projects that will help our region become more business friendly and try and reverse the downward spiral that has affected our families. I’m glad that Governor Paterson responded in a timely and positive manner to the request of my upstate colleagues and myself to release these funds as had been planned in the 2008-09 budget.”

Senator Thompson added: “\$120 million coming to Upstate New York through the Upstate Regional Blueprint Fund is great news and I am very appreciative to the Governor.”

In their letter to the Governor, the Senators said the Upstate Regional Blueprint Fund “must remain dedicated to Upstate New York as the first step in reversing the downward economic trend,” which has impacted Upstate New York for decades. The Senators asked that the Governor move to invest this valuable funding quickly, to preserve, protect and create jobs.

“I’m pleased the Governor heard our call to release these funds,” Senator Breslin said. “I look forward to seeing this Blueprint Fund go to work for Upstate New York to create jobs and rebuild our economy.”

The Governor said today that the fund will invest in projects that advance local development and small businesses, for instance making improvement to industrial parks and providing loans for purchase of equipment, real estate or other needs. According to the Governor, the first round of applications is due June 15 and awards will be announced as early as August 17.

Eligible applicants include municipalities, businesses, academic institutions, and non-profits and awards will range from \$100,000 to \$5 million. The program will give a preference to requests for loans, with principal repayments able to be recycled for future projects, and according to the Governor, to ensure that each project meets the specific needs of its region, all applications will undergo a competitive review process by ESD’s Regional Office Directors, with the support of central ESD resources.

Upstate Regional Blueprint Funds application forms will be posted on Empire State Development’s Web site at www.nylovesbiz.com on May 11, 2009.