



NEW YORK STATE SENATOR

George Winner

Winner: Limit state's ability to tax and spend

George Winner

May 28, 2009

ISSUE:

- [Finance](#)



Albany, N.Y.—State Senator George Winner (R-C-I, Elmira) announced today that he will sponsor the “Taxpayer Empowerment Act” (TEA), a plan to limit New York government’s ability to tax and spend.

“The only way to begin a true and meaningful turnaround in New York State is to limit government’s ability to tax and spend,” said Winner. “These actions represent the first steps necessary to put a stop to the job losses and population declines that continue to erode the underpinnings of upstate New York.”

[Watch video.](#)

The TEA proposal would:

- amend the state Constitution to enact a state spending cap that would limit year-to-year increases in state spending to four percent or 120 percent of the Consumer Price Index (CPI), whichever is less. Winner said that taxpayers would have been saved \$13.1 billion over the past five years if a similar constitutional state spending cap had been in place;

- enact a school property tax cap to limit annual school property tax increases to four percent or 120 percent of the CPI, whichever is less;

- ban unfunded state mandates on school districts and local governments;

- create a Regulatory Reform and Competitiveness Commission to review the impact of state regulations on businesses and propose revisions;

- require that any state tax increase be approved by at least a two-thirds “supermajority” in each house of the Legislature – something that’s currently required in 16 states – before it can become law; and

- establish a process of Initiative and Referendum to give the state’s voters a way to directly decide certain issues through a popular vote, a process currently available in 27 states.