



NEW YORK STATE SENATOR

Kenneth P. LaValle

Senate Republicans Unveil Taxpayer Empowerment Act (Tea)

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Plan Caps Taxing and Spending

Senator Kenneth P. LaValle today announced that Senate Republicans will unveil the “Taxpayer Empowerment Act” (TEA), which addresses the root causes of New York’s fiscal and economic problems—spending too much and taxing too much. Senator LaValle noted that TEA is a comprehensive reform package designed to protect taxpayers from picking up the tab for wasteful and irresponsible spending.

“People are organizing ‘tea parties’ across the state to protest skyrocketing property taxes and new taxes and fees,” said Senator LaValle. “The public’s confidence in the government’s management of their tax dollars has been shattered.

Taxing and spending are out of control and are driving people, industries, and jobs out of the state.”

According to Senator LaValle, the Senate Republican TEA program is a common-sense plan that will push state government in a new direction by strictly limiting taxes, spending, and mandates and will increase accountability at the state and local levels. The plan would limit state spending increases and the growth of school property taxes by enacting a cap of 4 percent or 120 percent of the Consumer Spending Index (CPI), whichever is less. It would also ban unfunded state mandates on local governments and school districts as well as eliminate unnecessary regulations that drive up costs for businesses; require a two-thirds vote to increase state taxes; and allow for Initiative and Referendum to give the people greater authority to change state laws.

“I am pleased that it is not just Senate Republicans speaking out against taxing and spending,” said Senator LaValle. “Two of the state’s most influential Democrats, Attorney General Andrew Cuomo and State Comptroller Thomas DiNapoli also believe the state spends and taxes too much.”

In an April 6, 2009 update on 2009-10 state budget, the New York Post quoted an Attorney General spokesman as saying, “the attorney general believes the state must do a better job of reducing government spending and increasing efficiencies in order to avoid taxes.” Comptroller DiNapoli was also reported to have blasted the budget before it was passed calling it a “buy time” document that “does not adequately respond to today’s economic realities.”

“Wasteful spending must be stopped,” Senator LaValle said. “We shouldn’t have to wait for tea-party style protests to bring attention to the demand for lower taxes and less spending.”