



NEW YORK STATE SENATOR

Catharine Young

## Urges Consumers to Sign Petition Drive to End Burdensome Utility Tax

CATHARINE YOUNG August 4, 2009



**ALBANY** - Senator Catharine Young (R,I,C – Olean) has launched a statewide petition drive to pressure Governor Paterson and New York City controlled legislators to eliminate the utility tax hike they included in this year's state budget.

“Upstate New Yorkers have just received the unwelcome news in the mail about a new utility tax to be used to off-set the state's bloated spending spree this year,” said Sen. Young. “The cost of our gas, electric, and telephone bills already were bad enough - this assessment has made it even worse. We have a golden opportunity on Thursday to undo some of the damage before another bill comes next month.”

During budget negotiations this year, Sen. Young, offered a legislative amendment to reject the new tax and later joined every one of her Senate Republican colleagues to vote against the budget's

enactment. Sen. Young and other Republican lawmakers were particularly opposed to the new utility tax, which was part of a massive \$8-billion package of tax-and-fee hikes contained in the budget – the largest tax increase in state history.

“I strongly opposed and voted against this tax, which is one of more than a hundred new taxes being used to cover the deficit created by a record spending increase of \$13 billion,” said Sen. Young. “Upstate businesses, homeowners and seniors cannot afford another tax. They already are struggling to make ends meet.”

Sen. Young said utility customers statewide have been receiving notice of the higher utility tax in their July utility bills. The new tax took effect on July 1<sup>st</sup> and raised the utility tax from .33% to 2%.

“Historically, this .33% tax has been used to pay for agencies that oversee the utilities,” said Sen. Young. “Now, about \$90 million from this tax will be used to pay for those agencies and about \$542 million will go directly to the General Fund to pay for this year’s out-of-control spending.”

“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,” said Sen. Young. “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.”

Sen. Young is encouraging anyone who is frustrated by the new utility assessment to sign her petition drive at [www.senatoryoungpetition.com](http://www.senatoryoungpetition.com).

The petition will also be accessible through Sen. Young’s Facebook page, or by visiting her website at <http://www.nysenate.gov/senator/catharine-young>. You can also request a hardcopy of this petition by calling her office toll free at 1-800-707-0058.