



NEW YORK STATE SENATOR

Andrew J. Lanza

Senator Lanza and Assemblyman Tobacco Urge Governor to Exempt Private Schools from MTA Payroll Tax

ANDREW J LANZA February 16, 2010

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Senator Andrew Lanza (R-24th Senate District) and Assemblyman Lou Tobacco (R,I,C-Staten Island) are calling on Governor Paterson to make an additional amendment to the executive budget which would reimburse Catholic and private schools for paying the MTA payroll tax. The governor has 30 days to make amendments to his budget, leaving him until February 18th to make final changes to his proposed spending plan.

The Staten Island lawmaker's call comes after the governor's recent changes to the budget which would increase the MTA payroll tax burden by .2 percent on the city's non-private and Catholic schools. Currently, only public schools are reimbursed for the MTA payroll tax.

With the state already withholding Mandated Services Aid and Comprehensive Attendance Program (CAP) funding to Catholic and private schools, Assemblyman Tobacco noted that the increased payroll tax could be a burden that many of the region's non-public schools cannot absorb.

"It targets private and catholic schools and lets public schools off the hook. Over time, this tax will increase tuition costs, force schools to close their doors, lead to teacher layoffs, and ultimately weaken our educational system," said Tobacco.

“This tax unfairly burdens private, religious and parochial schools,” said Senator Andrew Lanza. “These schools provide a service to all taxpayers and public school systems by relieving them of the burden of educating those additional students. Instead of being rewarded for that enormous contribution, they are being targeted by discriminatory measures such as the payroll tax.”

While Assemblyman Tobacco and Senator Lanza are sponsors of legislation that would reimburse private schools for the payroll tax (S.5832 and A.08726), they believe that making an additional amendment to the budget would be the fastest way to eliminate this burden on private schools.

“This is not about politics. It’s about our private and Catholic educational institutes and the children and families they serve. Private and Catholic schools need to be reimbursed for paying the MTA payroll tax,” concluded Tobacco.