



NEW YORK STATE SENATOR

George Winner

## Should State Impose Permanent Cap on Spending?

GEORGE WINNER March 24, 2010

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Albany, N.Y.—New York State Senator George Winner (R-C-I, Elmira) is giving area residents the opportunity to share their views on one proposal under discussion as a way to effectively control future state spending: cap it.

Late last week New York Governor David Paterson renewed the push for a state spending cap by introducing specific legislation for the Legislature's consideration. The Paterson proposal mirrors, but doesn't go as far as legislation Winner has co-sponsored – and the Senate has approved – in the past.

A 2010-2011 budget resolution approved by Senate Democratic leaders earlier this week, however, did not include a spending cap proposal.

"New York government's number one challenge in the foreseeable future will be to meet fundamental responsibilities with less spending and smarter spending. A Constitutionally mandated spending cap is one way to force that action," said Winner.

Winner co-sponsored legislation approved by the Senate in 2008 – the last time that Republicans controlled that chamber -- to amend the New York State Constitution (S. 7134, approved by the Senate on March 12, 2008) and limit year-to-year state spending increases to 120 percent of the consumer price index (CPI) or 4 percent, whichever is less. In any given year, 50 percent of state tax revenues exceeding the cap would be placed in a reserve fund, with the other half being returned to taxpayers in the form of direct rebates.

Winner said that if a similar cap had been in place over the past five years, state taxpayers would already have saved more than \$13 billion.

The 2008 measure also contained a series of additional public accountability initiatives.

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