



NEW YORK STATE SENATOR

Joseph A. Griffo

Griffo Reports of Senate's Quick Adoption of Tax Cap and Mandate Relief Measures

JOSEPH A. GRIFFO February 2, 2011

| ISSUE: **EDUCATION, LOCAL GOVERNMENT, FINANCIAL AID, TAXES, PROPERTY TAX**



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(Albany) – Senator Joseph A. Griffo (R-C-IP, Rome) today said that the Senate passed measures designed to give the New Yorkers relief from property taxes and to ease the burden of unfunded state mandates on schools and municipal governments.

“We took the first major step today toward reining in runaway government spending,” said State Senator Griffo. “The property tax cap represents needed change to help make New York affordable again without compromising public safety or essential government services.”

Griffo stressed that since New York’s taxes are consistently ranked among the worst in the nation that today’s bill passage will spark further financial changes in the coming months.

“What we did today was to give voters a choice – we’re going to prevent another family from moving out and we’re going to keep another business from closing due to rapidly escalating property taxes,” he continued. “New York residents will finally have some predictability and control when it comes to their property tax bill.”

“For the new Governor to push for this bill (S.2706) before his releasing his Budget proposal and for the Senate to quickly pass it, shows that we all understand the urgency that New Yorkers expect if we’re to build a new and stronger economic foundation,” Griffo concluded. Griffo pointed out that the Senate today also approved a companion bill (S.2707) that would assist municipal governments and school districts from burdensome mandates, giving them a greater flexibility to contain costs and in turn lessen the property tax burden on their residents.

“I’ve said for years that a property tax cap will be ineffectual, if it’s not coupled with a mechanism for a local government to achieve relief from state-imposed mandates,” Griffo said. “Any future mandates must have funds to help implement it.”

In addition to the property tax cap legislation, Griffo indicated that the Senate will act on a resolution, sponsored by the Senate Majority, urging the Governor and his Mandate Relief and Medicaid Redesign Teams, to provide lasting and meaningful real property tax relief. Specifically, the resolution urges the mandate relief panel to:

- Focus on New York's service delivery structure that requires school districts, local governments and other local taxing districts to administer and fund mandated programs;
- Look for ways to reduce the costs of mandated programs on schools and local governments by determining how school districts and local governments may be given greater ability to control costs
- Examine the reason for delays in state reimbursement for mandated programs
- Consider the practice of cost-shifting of mandated programs
- Identify opportunities for eliminating or reducing unfunded and underfunded mandates imposed by the New York State government on local governments and school districts.

The resolution also urges the Governor's Medicaid redesign panel to work with Medicaid stakeholders to conduct a comprehensive review of the state's Medicaid program, and make recommendations for cost saves and quality improvement measures to meet specific budget reductions for Medicaid spending.

Both bills will now be sent to the Assembly for their consideration.