



NEW YORK STATE SENATOR

Betty Little

Little: Governor's mandate team releases first report

BETTY LITTLE March 2, 2011

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GOVERNOR'S MANDATE TEAM RELEASES FIRST REPORT

A mandate relief redesign team formed in January by Governor Andrew Cuomo to examine and make recommendations to reduce the burden of unfunded mandates on local governments and schools issued its first report yesterday.

Redesign team member Senator Betty Little said the executive order required a preliminary report be issued by March 1. The team will continue meeting in the months ahead to further scrutinize unfunded mandates with the goal of eliminating those which are outdated, unnecessary and redundant.

"The report says first, let's do no more harm," said Senator Little. "By enacting a state law or Constitutional amendment to prohibit the imposition of new mandates with very limited exceptions, we will give schools and local governments the assurance that the state won't be passing the financial burden of new mandates down the line.

"There's also an acknowledgement that the one-size-fits-all regulatory approach is unfair and that there needs to be more accommodation of local governments. The State Administrative Procedure Act (SAPA)

needs to be amended to better allow for waivers of mandated regulations and give localities an opportunity to offer alternatives. The current process isn't being used because it is overly cumbersome.

"Every level of government is faced with unprecedented challenges due to the current fiscal crisis.

Flexibility is essential in responding effectively. This preliminary report offers some concrete ideas and I look forward to continuing to meet and develop this further."

The State Senate earlier this year approved several mandate relief measures, including one that would require the state to provide funding for new mandates.

The mandate redesign team comprises 20 voting members, including state legislators and representatives of villages, cities, towns, school districts, organized labor and business. According to the executive order establishing the team, the first report was due March 1, with quarterly reports following and final recommendations made no later than the end of the 2011-12 fiscal year.

To learn more about the mandate relief redesign team, review the preliminary report or offer a specific proposal visit, <http://www.governor.ny.gov/mandaterelief>.