



NEW YORK STATE SENATOR

Jack M. Martins

Senate's Budget Makes Education a Priority

JACK M. MARTINS March 21, 2011

| ISSUE: **EDUCATION**



Senate's Proposal Eliminates MTA Payroll Tax for Schools

The New York State Senate's budget proposal for the 2011-2012 fiscal year closes a \$10 billion budget deficit, calls for even less spending than the Governor's budget proposal and sends a message that education is a priority.

Among the initiatives in the Senate's budget proposal designed to provide tax relief is the elimination of the MTA's payroll tax for all schools. When the MTA payroll tax was

implemented by the former Governor and Democratic Senate Majority in 2009, school districts were supposed to be reimbursed for their payments. However, the promise was broken. During tough economic times when schools were forced to seek budget savings, millions of dollars were diverted from our classrooms to subsidize the MTA.

The Senate's budget proposal makes all schools, both public and private, exempt from the MTA payroll tax, putting the money back in the hands of the taxpayers. "It's bad enough that they imposed a payroll tax on our businesses to subsidize the MTA, but including schools was an all time low," said State Senator Jack M. Martins. "Taking money from our schools and opportunities from our children to further feed the MTA was irresponsible. I am glad to have been part of this effort to restore funds to our schools. Taxpayer funds for education must be spent for education."

The Senate's budget further restores \$265 million for public schools, prevents nearly \$300 million in cost shifts in education, and restores \$98 million for 4201 schools. In addition, the Senate restored \$4.2 million in funding for libraries.

"I have thoroughly enjoyed my visits to local schools, meeting with school children, teachers, and administrators. You get a great perspective from our school children who often ask questions regarding the state's finances. I explain to them that the state cannot spend more than it takes in. Cutting spending is a necessity," Senator Martins said. "As I have told our young students, 'Your parents know how to spend their own money for their families better than we do in the state. To that end, in our mandate to cut spending, we will continue to seek ways to keep their money in their hands.'"