



NEW YORK STATE SENATOR

Jack M. Martins

## Senate Passes Legislation to Establish Fixed School Tax Rate for Seniors

JACK M. MARTINS June 21, 2011

| ISSUE: **LOCAL GOVERNMENT, SENIORS**

| COMMITTEE: **LOCAL GOVERNMENT**

The New York State Senate today passed legislation that would establish a fixed real property school tax rate for seniors who are eligible for the enhanced STAR exemption, providing much needed tax relief to hundreds of thousands of seniors throughout New York State.

“The goal of this legislative session was to bring tax relief to our residents. This bill will bring some relief to our seniors who have built our communities. It is important that we ensure that our seniors remain in our communities. This measure makes it a little easier during these difficult economic time. This will help to stabilize taxes for those 70 and older,” said Senator Jack M. Martins, who supported the bill.

“Long Island residents pay among the highest property taxes in the nation,” said Senator Ken LaValle, who sponsored the bill. “Many seniors live on fixed incomes and find it extremely difficult to keep pace with continuous increases in school taxes. Even the slightest increase could mean taking money away from their food budget or much-needed medical care. This measure would stabilize taxes for Enhanced STAR recipients 70 and older and help ease the

anxiety seniors experience in anticipation of a school tax increase."

"Many senior citizens throughout the state are living on fixed incomes and seeing their property tax bills rise every year," said Senate Majority Leader Dean Skelos. "The burden of school property taxes are forcing many seniors out of their homes -- this bill would freeze the tax rate and stop skyrocketing property taxes from eating more and more of seniors' income."

Under the bill (S.2998), homeowners aged 70 or older and meet the eligibility requirements for the enhanced STAR exemption would be eligible to apply annually for the fixed real property school tax rate at local option. The state would reimburse school districts for lost revenue caused by freezing the tax rates for seniors.

The bill was sent to the Assembly