



NEW YORK STATE SENATOR

Thomas F. O'Mara

Senator O'Mara statement on the 2011 legislative session

THOMAS F. O'MARA June 24, 2011



Albany, N.Y., June 24—State Senator Tom O'Mara (R-C, Big Flats) released the following statement today on the conclusion of the Legislature's 2011 regular session, his first as a state senator:

"The Legislature is leaving Albany with no spending increases, no new state taxes or fees, and without borrowing to increase the state's already-high burden of debt. That's pretty remarkable by Albany's standards over the past decade, and it's about time.

"Equally important, we've refocused state government's commitment to meaningful Medicaid reform, upstate property tax and mandate relief, a better business climate and a streamlined bureaucracy. Overall, it's been a positive session for state taxpayers.

"We still have a long way to go in the area of mandate relief, but this marks the start that's needed for the deeper mandate relief that now remains the number one priority. I will continue to do anything and everything possible to encourage the governor and the Legislature to put in place the necessary mandate relief to make this property tax cap as effective as it can be. That's especially true in the area of Medicaid, the heaviest unfunded mandate burdening localities.

"So now we keep working at it. I look forward to working with my colleagues in the Legislature and locally to build on this year's successes, make them stronger where they need to be, and keep up this

momentum for sustained fiscal discipline, tax relief, mandate relief and private-sector economic growth. “This session represents a good beginning that moves New York State several important steps closer to a long-term turnaround built on fiscal discipline and responsibility. It points New York in a different – and better – direction.”

[\[watch Senator O'Mara's comments on the floor of the Senate earlier tonight\]](#)

This year's budget was one of only a handful of state budgets that have been adopted on time since 1975. It implemented the first year-to-year decrease in state spending in 15 years, contained no new or higher state taxes or fees, and no borrowing. O'Mara said that he's especially encouraged by the session's emphasis on the upstate economy and private-sector job growth, pointing to several key initiatives including the:

- > enactment of a 2% cap on school and local property tax levy increases;
- > enactment of the “New York State Mandate Relief Act” to provide \$127 million in immediate mandate relief and, among other provisions, create a Mandate Relief Council to establish an ongoing process for more comprehensive mandate review and relief;
- > strengthening the business tax incentives and other economic development benefits offered through the state's Excelsior Jobs Program;
- > the creation of a series of Regional Economic Development Councils to fashion specific job creation strategies around the state; and
- > the creation of the Recharge NY Power Program to provide permanent economic development power vital to existing local manufacturers like Anchor Glass and that will make New York more attractive to prospective employers.