



NEW YORK STATE SENATOR

James L. Seward

# Calendar Quirk Won't Cost Taxpayers

James L. Seward

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ONEONTA, 11/01/11 – State Senator James L. Seward (R/C/I – Oneonta) today applauded an administrative decision to reschedule the due date for an “extra” mandated Medicaid payment from counties in 2012. The slight postponement will save homeowners and taxpayers millions of dollars statewide.

**“Local elected leaders are already dealing with enough bureaucratic red tape and increased costs without adding an unintentional calendar quirk to the equation,”** said Senator Seward. **“By reversing the mandate that would have forced counties to write an additional check in 2012, taxpayers will avoid a costly expense.”**

Savings total more than \$1.4 million in Senator Seward’s district alone. The change will reduce 2012 Medicaid costs by \$195,453 for Chenango County, \$198,070 for Cortland County, \$192,471 for Greene County, \$267,373 for Herkimer County, \$206,784 for Otsego County, \$112,922 for Schoharie County, and \$235,222 for Tompkins County.

Counties make payments at the beginning of each week to fund their share of Medicaid. In 2012, there will be 53 Mondays, rather than the normal 52. The state Health Department previously had sent a letter to counties informing them that because the January 1, 2013 legal holiday falls on a Tuesday, the local governments would be required to send the money earlier in December.

Senator Seward joined several of his colleagues in urging state officials to reverse the decision and provide financial relief for taxpayers.

**“The extra payment strains county budgets and I did not want to see local taxes rise in order to make the adjusted deadline. I am pleased the state Health Department was able to come up with a more effective approach to the situation,”** Seward added.

The state Health Department has moved the payment due date to January 2, 2013. The state will bridge the gap and temporarily cover the payments that are required to be forwarded to the federal government.

Senator Seward is also fighting to completely eliminate Medicaid expenses from county budgets, co-sponsoring legislation calling for a phased-in state takeover of the local Medicaid costs.