



NEW YORK STATE SENATOR

James L. Seward

Seward: Return To Albany To Pass Flood Relief Measures

James L. Seward

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ISSUE:

- [Agriculture](#)
- [Local Government](#)
- [Government Operations](#)
- [Legislature](#)
- [Session](#)



ONEONTA, 11/10/11 – State Senator James L. Seward (R/C/I-Oneonta) today called for a special session of the state senate to consider flood-related initiatives.

“Families, businesses and local governments continue to cope with the aftermath of Hurricane Irene and Tropical Storm Lee,” said Senator Seward. **“Since the storms first hit our region I have been advocating for government assistance to make our communities whole. I have met continually with local officials, toured damaged areas and discussed ongoing needs with homeowners, business people and elected officials. The recovery is underway but more must be done.”**

Senator Seward is cosponsoring several bills that would provide tax relief to property owners and local governments. The legislation would require the state to pick up the local share of public infrastructure repair costs, permit a reassessment of storm damaged properties, and allow school districts to institute a flexible school tax payment plan.

Senator Seward is also preparing legislation that would offer flood victims an income tax credit against the property taxes they paid this fall (and will pay in January) on property no longer valued at its pre-flood level.

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“Imagine you have lost your home and everything you own and to compound matters, you receive a school tax bill for that destroyed property. Families don’t know where to turn next, and steps need to be taken immediately to assist them.

“Local elected officials, highway crews and emergency responders are working overtime to revive their communities. The state’s disaster response has been commendable to date but legislative action is now needed to provide additional assistance. A focused special session of both the senate and assembly is needed to continue the flood recovery,” Seward concluded.

-30-

Senator Seward’s letter to Senate Majority Leader Skelos is attached.