



NEW YORK STATE SENATOR

Thomas F. O'Mara

O'Mara: Do you agree state should begin Medicaid takeover in 2012?

THOMAS F. O'MARA January 3, 2012

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Albany, N.Y., January 3—On the eve of Governor Andrew Cuomo's second State of the State Message to the Legislature tomorrow, the official kickoff to the 2102 legislative session, state Senator Tom O'Mara (R-C, Big Flats) is giving area residents an opportunity to weigh in on one of this year's key debates: whether New York should begin a plan to take over the local cost of Medicaid and alleviate counties of their single-largest state-mandated expense.

A new poll on O'Mara's Senate website asks the following question: **Do you agree that Governor Cuomo and the Legislature must begin a state takeover of local Medicaid costs in 2012?**

Late last year, **O'Mara joined a bipartisan group of state legislators** to co-sponsor legislation (S.5889) that would begin an eight-year phase-in of a complete state takeover of local Medicaid costs and save county taxpayers approximately \$180 million this year.

O'Mara has also introduced legislation (S.5787) with local Assemblymen Phil Palmesano (R-C-I, Corning) and Chris Friend (R-Big Flats) that would effectively freeze local Medicaid costs.

While the governor has previously dismissed the idea of a state takeover, O'Mara and other lawmakers continue to believe it's unrealistic for the state to keep requiring local governments to find a way to handle escalating local Medicaid costs in the face of the 2-percent property tax cap the state imposed as part of last year's state budget.

"I'm glad to give local residents this opportunity to express their opinions on whether it should be a top priority in 2012 to begin putting in place a new system of Medicaid where county governments never again have to raise local property taxes to meet rising Medicaid costs," O'Mara said.