



NEW YORK STATE SENATOR

Lee M. Zeldin

Senator Zeldin: Executive Budget Falls Short on Education Funding For Long Island Schools

LEE M. ZELDIN January 20, 2012

Senator Charles J. Fuschillo, Jr., Senator Jack Martins and Senator Lee Zeldin today stated that the recent proposed executive budget which calls for a 4% increase in state aid to education does not provide Long Island schools with their fair share.

In the recently announced executive budget, Nassau and Suffolk Counties receive a disproportionate share of state education aid. Long Island is home to approximately 17 percent of the state's students. However, out of the over \$19.7 billion in state education aid appropriated for school districts statewide under the executive budget, aid to Long Island falls short.

"The executive budget proposal shortchanges Long Island's students. The budget proposal did not raise taxes, and that's exactly the right approach because people cannot afford to pay more. Now it must help provide additional tax relief to residents who pay some of the nation's highest property taxes by giving Long Island schools their fair share," said Senator Fuschillo.

"Long Island taxpayers are tired of settling for so much less than we pay for. Our communities are not only some of the highest taxed in the state but the country as well. Yet so much of that tax money never makes its way back to our schools and our children. It's

simply not fair and we can't look the other way when it comes to our kids. Long Island can't keep investing in New York State if New York keeps shortchanging our children," said Senator Martins.

"Long Island property taxpayers should receive the best possible return on their investment. I am hopeful that the budget being negotiated between the Governor and Legislature provides Long Islanders with an equitable share of school aid compared with the rest of New York State. As the representative for a Senate District with multiple low wealth, high needs school districts, I believe it should be of particular concern that all Long Island school children receive the best possible education at the most efficient cost possible. For the future of our region, it's imperative that this budget provides equity to my constituents' property tax bills and school children. I trust that our Governor and Legislature will continue working well together in a bi-partisan manner in the best interests of all New Yorkers, including all of Long Island," said Senator Zeldin.

Senator Fuschillo, Senator Martins, and Senator Zeldin pledged to continue fighting for Long Island's fair share of state education aid, as well as mandate relief for school districts, during the legislative budget review process.