



NEW YORK STATE SENATOR

Patty Ritchie

Sen. Ritchie Continues Push for Taxpayer Relief

PATTY RITCHIE June 6, 2012

| ISSUE: **TAXES, STAR (SCHOOL TAX RELIEF PROGRAM)**



Senate OK's Her Bipartisan Bill to Restore STAR Rebates for Homeowners; Seniors Would Receive First Checks; Assembly Needs to Get on Board

State Senator Patty Ritchie today announced unanimous Senate approval of her plan to restore the STAR Rebate checks that provided real savings to homeowners from New York's notoriously high property taxes.

It's the second time that the Senate passed a plan to restore the rebate checks, which were taken away in 2009, before Senator Ritchie took office.

*** **WATCH SENATOR RITCHIE SPEAK ON THE SENATE FLOOR ON STAR REBATES** ***

"New York's property taxes are simply too high, and while we've made progress in putting a stop to endless tax increases, homeowners need more relief, and they need it now," said Senator Ritchie, who is a prime sponsor of the bipartisan bill.

"STAR rebates provided homeowners with savings they could see, and in many cases, made a real difference in the ability of senior citizens to stay in their homes, and younger homeowners to be able to afford other essentials for their families," Senator Ritchie said.

New Yorkers pay among the highest property taxes in the nation—86 percent higher than average. STAR rebates helped lower property taxes by providing direct cash payments to homeowners that were based on the amount of their property tax bills.

In Oswego, Jefferson and St. Lawrence Counties, those rebate checks averaged up to \$529 a year; with larger checks for senior homeowners.

Senator Ritchie was a driving force behind the Senate's plan to restore the STAR rebates this year, as part of the state budget, but that plan was rejected by downstate leaders of the Assembly.

Senator Ritchie's bill (S.7447) approved by the Senate today would restore STAR rebates to senior homeowners (over aged 65) beginning in 2013, and to all eligible homeowners the following year.

Rebates would be delivered by check or, in some cases, as a credit on a homeowner's income tax return.

The bill was sent to the Assembly.