



NEW YORK STATE SENATOR

John J. Flanagan

Senator Flanagan Working To Restore STAR Property Tax Rebate Checks

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In an effort to provide tax relief to Long Island homeowners, Senator John Flanagan (2nd Senate District) recently voted to restore the STAR Rebate Check program. The program, which was eliminated in 2009 when the Senate Democrats were in the majority in the Senate, would provide \$202 million in property tax relief to senior citizens in the 2012-13 school year and \$1.2 billion in property tax relief to families across the state starting in the 2013-14 school year.

Senator Flanagan was a leader in the fight to create the original STAR Rebate Check program in 2006 and has been fighting to get it restored since it was eliminated during budget negotiations in 2009.

“While the STAR program has been very effective in providing homeowners with property tax relief, the STAR rebate program provides that relief directly to New York residents so they can spend their money the way they decide. This money belongs to them and New York State should make every effort to give it directly back to taxpayers. I urge the Assembly and Governor Cuomo to join us in bringing this beneficial program back to our residents,” stated Senator Flanagan.

The median property tax paid nationally is \$1,917, while New Yorkers pay \$3,755 - 96 percent more than the national median in property taxes. New Yorkers pay the highest local taxes in the country as a percentage of personal income, almost 80 percent above the national average.

Under the provisions of the bill, beginning in the 2012-13 school year, senior citizens would receive a rebate check in an amount that equals 25 percent of the current STAR exemption benefit. The benefit would increase to 35 percent of the STAR exemption starting in the 2013-14 school year.

Basic STAR rebate checks for families across our state would be restored beginning in the 2013-14 school year.

The amount of the rebate checks would be determined by income level and the local school district tax rate. The income brackets would be as follows for those living on Long Island:

Incomes up to \$120,000 will get a rebate equal to 60 percent of their STAR exemption

\$120,001 to \$175,000 will get a rebate equal to 45 percent of their STAR exemption

\$175,001 to \$250,000 will get a rebate equal to 30 percent of their STAR exemption

The Basic STAR rebate check percentages would remain the same in the 2014-15 school year, but would increase in each of the next two years to 70 percent, 52.5 percent and 35 percent in 2015-16 and to 80 percent, 60 percent and 40 percent in 2016-17.

In any year when there is no appropriation for the rebate checks, senior citizens and middle class taxpayers would be able to claim a property tax credit, equivalent to their rebate check, against their personal income taxes.

The bill was sent to the Assembly.