



NEW YORK STATE SENATOR

David Carlucci

Senator David Carlucci Joins with Rockland Homeowners to Restore their STAR Rebate Check

DAVID CARLUCCI October 25, 2012

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



NEW CITY, NY – Senator David Carlucci (D-Rockland/Orange) today joined with scores of Rockland County homeowners who demanded a full restoration of the STAR Rebate Check to help working class families across New York State.

At the home of Murray and Rosalind Jacobson in New City, Senator Carlucci called on Albany to restore critical dollars that would fully fund the New York State School Tax Relief

Program, also known as STAR.

“Restoring the STAR Rebate Check for homeowners will provide meaningful tax relief for property owners while at the same time investing in our children’s education future,” **said Senator Carlucci**. “This is an investment that we can’t afford not to make, and today we are issuing a wake up call to Albany to renew that promise to taxpayers and make it more affordable for New Yorkers to live in the Hudson Valley.”

Those who make less than a combined income of \$500,000 are eligible for the STAR Program. While other parts of the STAR Program exist today, critics argue that it is only a meager fraction of what homeowners used to receive. The STAR exemptions apply only to school district taxes and not other property taxes.

There are two types of STAR Exemptions:

- **Basic STAR** – available for owner-occupied, primary residences where the resident owner and spouse income is less than \$500,000. This exempts the first \$30,000 of the full value of a home from school taxes.
- **Enhanced STAR** – provided an increased benefit for the primary residences of senior citizens (age 65 and older) with qualifying incomes. This exempts the first \$62,200 of the full value of a home from school taxes as of 2012-2013 school tax bills.

The Lower Hudson Valley, notably Rockland and Westchester Counties, is often cited as one of the highest property tax bastions throughout the nation. School taxes often make up the majority of a homeowner’s property tax bill.

Facing a massive budget deficit in wake of the Great Recession, back in 2009 the New York State Legislature and then-Governor David Paterson revoked the STAR Rebate Check, resulting in hundreds of dollars lost for the average middle class family. Back then, this meant an average loss of \$692 dollars for the average homeowner who received the Basic STAR Rebate Check, and an average loss of \$705 dollars for the average homeowner entitled to receive the Enhanced STAR Rebate Check.

Jo-Anne Housman, Homeowner from New City, said: “As a senior who lives on an extremely limited budget, a rebate check is money that will absolutely stretch a long way and help make life more affordable for me in Rockland County.”

Senator Carlucci has co-sponsored bi-partisan legislation (S.7447) that would reinstate what is referred to as the Middle Class STAR rebate, a program that sends checks to eligible STAR recipients using three income brackets based upon a sliding scale. The Enhanced STAR rebate checks are already based upon income and do not utilize any income brackets.

For Rockland County, the income brackets would be determined as follows:

- Those making \$0 – 120,000 would receive 60% of the STAR Exemption
- Those making \$129,001 - \$175,000 would receive 45% of the STAR Exemption
- Those making \$175,001 - \$250,000 would receive 30% of the STAR Exemption

Taxpayers earning more than \$250,000 would not be eligible to receive a check.

The bill was passed in the Senate on June 6, 2012 but failed to gain traction in the State Assembly. It would cost approximately \$202 million dollars in the first fiscal year.

To generate grassroots support among this issue, back in June 2012 Senator Carlucci sent out petition mailers to Rockland residents asking them to join his campaign to reinstate the STAR Rebate Check. Since then, over 1,600 residents have mailed back their petitions to join his effort.

To join Senator Carlucci's Online Campaign to restore the STAR Rebate Check, please visit www.senatorcarlucci.com to receive the latest news and updates on the issue.

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