



NEW YORK STATE SENATOR

Betty Little

Statement on 2013-14 Executive Budget Proposal

BETTY LITTLE January 23, 2013

| ISSUE: **BUDGET**

“Governor Cuomo’s proposed budget is much of what I expected with a continued focus on the economy and a commitment to not increase taxes. The less than two percent spending increase reflects the fact that revenues are still weak. The good news is the size of this year’s budget deficit is much more manageable than the previous two indicating that our current budget has been fiscally responsible.

“The largest spending increases will be in education and health care. I’ve heard from a lot of schools and know that this increase is very important for all of them. To help them further, as well as local governments, we see more mandate relief. I am pleased a number of measures are included in the proposal that will provide flexibility and some freedom from these state-imposed requirements.

“The extraordinary growth in pension costs has made budgeting on the local level very difficult. The executive budget includes a plan to provide at local option some predictability and stability by ‘locking in’ contribution rates. Essentially, the anticipated long-term savings of Tier VI could be applied toward addressing today’s fiscal reality and need for short-term savings for local governments.

“The focus on the upstate economy is very encouraging. I’m pleased to see funding for tourism advertising and a program to promote locally grown produce and food products, which fits the North Country region well.

“In the days ahead, I will be reviewing the budget plan to learn more about the details. As budget hearings get under way, I look forward to the discussion and hearing from constituents and groups in the district wanting to weigh in on the 2013-14 budget plan.”