



NEW YORK STATE SENATOR

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From the Desk of Senator Jack M. Martins

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Building the Ark

There's an old joke about God commanding a modern-day Noah to build an ark, warning him that the earth would be flooded in a year. Twelve months later, all Noah had was a pile of logs. He said, "God, forgive me but there were big problems. "Like what?" God asked.

Noah responded, "First, I had to get permits for construction, and your plans didn't meet building codes. So I hired an engineer to redraw them. Then I tangled with OSHA over whether the Ark needed sprinklers and floatation devices. Next, my neighbor complained that I was violating zoning by building it in my yard, so I had to get a variance from the planning commission. I had problems getting wood because the Forest Service banned cutting trees to protect the Spotted Owl. The Fish and Wildlife Service heard and objected to me taking any animals. The carpenters said I wasn't paying enough so I had to negotiate with the Labor Relations Board. Meanwhile, the EPA said they have jurisdiction over floods and demanded an environmental impact statement. The Army Corps of Engineers insisted on a map of the proposed flood plain, so I sent them a globe. Then the IRS seized my assets, claiming that I was building the ark to flee and avoid taxes and finally the state notified me that it would have to be registered as a recreational water craft. I really think this is going to take another five or six years."

Noah waited. The sky cleared and the sun started shining, so he said hopefully, "You mean you're not going to destroy everything?" "No," God said, "too much red tape."

As funny as it sounds, anyone starting a business in New York knows just how Noah felt. The discouraging reality is that government is the single biggest deterrent to business and job creation in our state. Our regulatory burden alone is notorious, consisting of 23 Titles and 83 volumes with thousands upon thousands of rules. In fact, just the rule-making manual is 66 pages long! Throw in our onerous taxes and it's no wonder business goes elsewhere.

That's why the state senate is committed to restoring New York as the nation's economic engine. We've laid the groundwork with consecutive, on-time state budgets that closed \$13 billion in deficits without raising taxes. We saved \$18.6 billion by sticking to a 2% spending cap and we reduced tax rates to the lowest they've been in 50 years. These fundamental reforms give investors confidence that New York has changed the way it does business but

now we must maximize this unprecedented bi-partisan cooperation with creative solutions that bring commerce and jobs back to the Empire State. Here are some key proposals from our “Blueprint For Jobs.”

Small Business

- Small businesses are the leading source of new jobs both in our state and nationally. We propose eliminating the state’s corporate tax for these 200,000 small businesses over the next four years, freeing up \$250 million for reinvestment and expansion.

Manufacturing

- At one time, manufacturing fueled New York’s progress as the best place to work and raise a family. Our plan would again eliminate the state corporate tax for manufacturers for a window of three years, allowing for \$445 million for reinvestment and expansion.

The Energy Tax

- We reject the Governor’s plan to extend the energy tax that was established to fuel the state’s unrestrained 2009 spending spree. It’s there on all our utility bills. We advocate phasing it out so the \$500 million annually goes back where it belongs – to you.

Repeal 1,000 Rules

- We propose state agencies identify and repeal at least 1,000 needless job-killing regulations. (Florida discovered 3,000.) We’d also like to see industry-specific roundtables with business leaders who can offer input on how to streamline the regulatory colossus we’ve created.

Reduce Paperwork

- Our bill would eliminate the absurdly unnecessary annual wage notification requirement that New York passed in 2010. People know what they're being paid and they don't need 51 million pages of paper a year (actual estimate) to confirm it. It's a massive, costly mandate for our businesses that wastes millions of dollars and countless hours. Sometimes dumb laws beg for repeal. This is one.

Fast Track Permits

- When a small business applies for a permit, they shouldn't be left waiting for months on end. Our bill requires state agencies to publicly disclose their wait and response times. If approval takes too long, applicants would be entitled to a refund.