



NEW YORK STATE SENATOR

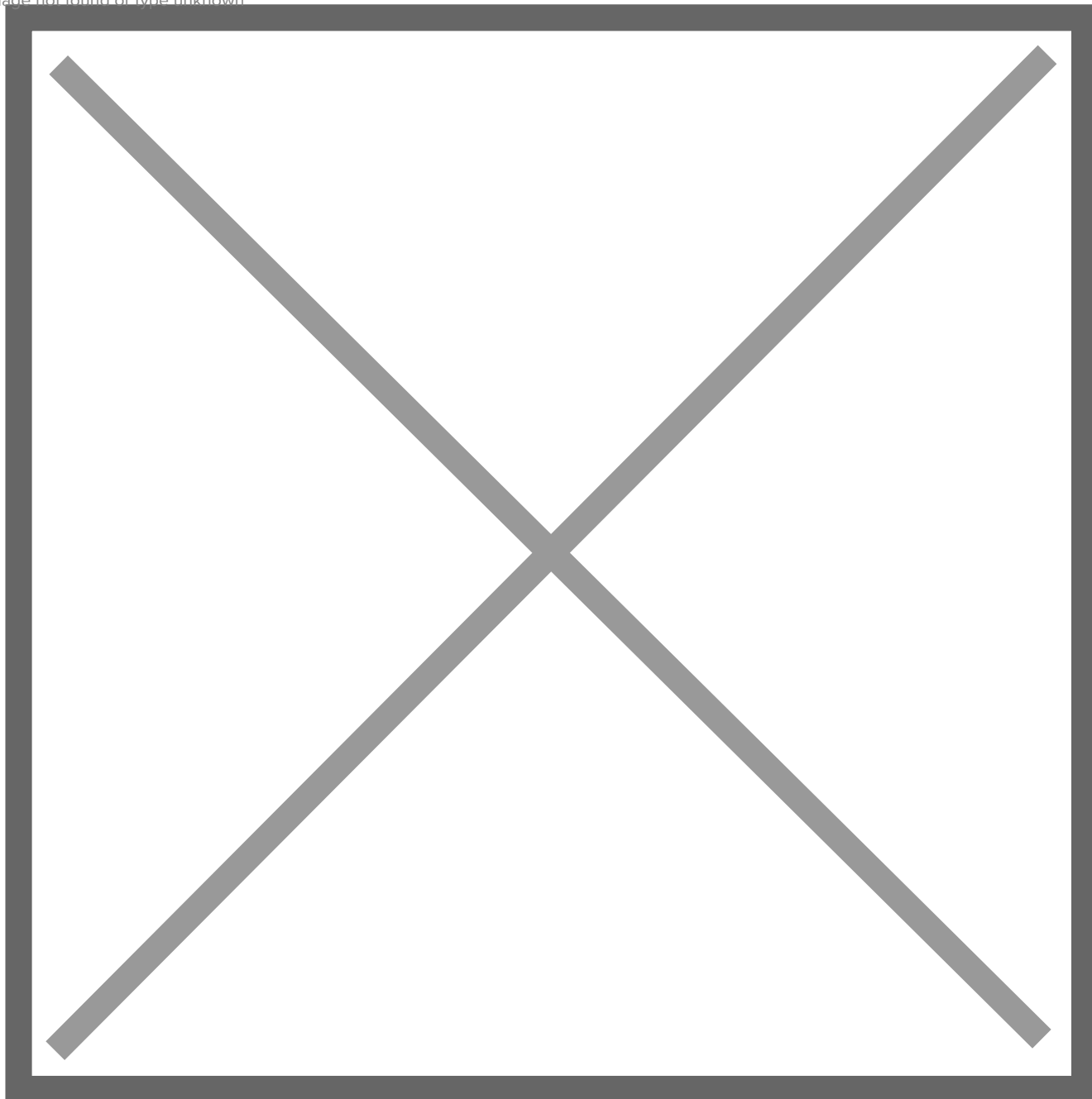
Susan Serino

Senator Sue Serino Fights for a 'Brighter Future'

SUE SERINO March 12, 2015

| ISSUE: **AGING, EPIC (ELDERLY PHARMACEUTICAL INSURANCE COVERAGE PROGRAM)**

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SENATOR SUE SERINO FIGHTS FOR A ‘BRIGHTER FUTURE’

Statement on the NYS Senate’s Budget Proposal

ALBANY, NY— Senator Sue Serino (R, C, I—Hyde Park) joined the NYS Senate Republican Majority today to advance its “Brighter Future” budget plan that will create a new property tax rebate program for middle-class homeowners, extend historic opportunities to students

at all levels, make significant investments in New York's infrastructure to create good-paying jobs, and provide invaluable resources to improve quality of life for our seniors.

"In coming to Albany, I promised my constituents that I would fight to lower taxes, create tangible jobs, improve education and empower our seniors. This plan accomplishes all of that and more," said Senator Sue Serino. "It's bold and it's innovative, but most importantly, it delivers for hardworking New Yorkers."

Highlights of the 'Brighter Future' Plan include significant property tax relief through a new rebate program. Building on the Governor's proposal, the new rebate will provide the average New York homeowner with a check worth over \$400 dollars.

"Plain and simple, our taxes are just too high and my constituents need relief," Serino continued, "Coupled with the STAR exemption and the existing freeze credit, our plan would provide New Yorkers with the most property tax relief in state history. Better yet, it would make the property tax cap permanent so middle-class tax payers can breathe a little easier."

The Senate Majority's plan makes job creation a priority by investing directly in infrastructure and development. To this end, the plan:

- advances a \$200 million small business package;
- increases the business income tax exemption resulting in a savings of \$125 million annually for small businesses and farms and would positively impact more than 500,000 New York businesses;
- expands the Executive's small corporation rate reduction to save 42,500 businesses a total of \$40 million annually;
- includes funding for critical infrastructure and revitalization needs, including \$1.5 billion for upstate revitalization project;

- proposes \$1.5 billion for highway and bridge capital projects as part of a new five-year road and bridge capital program – doubling the Executive’s proposal;
- calls for \$700 million for regionally significant economic development projects statewide to help create jobs, \$25 million for Upstate transit capital projects and \$50 million for the Main Street Revitalization program to assist local governments in cleaning up blighted areas; and
- adds \$50 million for the Consolidated Local Streets and Highway Program (CHIPS).

“My constituents will be especially happy to hear that our plan would completely eliminate the contentious 18-a energy tax surcharge this year instead of in two years,” Serino continued.

The Senate’s Budget plan aims to provide an especially bright future for our students—at every level—by advancing \$1.9 billion in additional school aid. Further, it fully eliminates the \$1 billion that remains of the Gap Elimination Adjustment (GEA) scheme imposed by Democrats in 2010.

Senator Serino said, “While GEA might not be a buzzword, my constituents should know that since its implementation, it has cost our local schools over \$160 million dollars in the funding that they need in order to provide vital services to our kids. Eliminating it is good for taxpayers, it’s good for our schools and it’s great for our students.”

Further, the proposal aims to make college more affordable for our students and seeks to relieve some of the burden that crushing student loan debt has placed on too many of our students.

As the Chair of the Senate Committee on Aging, Senator Serino notes that the Senate Majority’s budget proposal would increase funding to Community Services for the Elderly

(CSE) by millions of dollars, saying “This money will empower our seniors by providing them with countless services that will improve their quality of life and allow them to maintain their independence right here in New York.”

Serino also notes that the proposal includes additional funding meant to be used to combat Lyme Disease, “As the Chair of the Task Force on Lyme and Tick-Borne Diseases and especially as a resident of the Hudson Valley, I cannot overstate the importance of this money. It would go directly toward programs meant to raise awareness, improve diagnosis and treatment and ultimately combat these horrendous illnesses.”

Senator Serino concluded by saying, “Today represents just one step in the budget process and we’re still in negotiations, but this is a new year,” said Senator Serino. “I hope that the Assembly will step up to the plate and work with us to make these proposals a reality for the hardworking New Yorkers who deserve them.”

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