



NEW YORK STATE SENATOR

Michael H. Ranzenhofer

More Progress Coming Out of 2015 Legislative Session

MICHAEL H. RANZENHOFER August 18, 2015

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Look for...

Senator Mike Ranzenhofer's
Monthly Column

...In your local newspaper
the third week of every month

By: Michael H. Ranzenhofer

As I outlined in my column last month, the extension of the property tax cap was not only one of my legislative priorities, it was one of the major achievements of this year's session. However, more progress has been made on efforts to control spending, cut taxes and create jobs.

The 2015-16 State Budget is balanced, on-time and it avoids new taxes and fees. Additionally, expenditures are being held below two percent. Taxpayers have saved \$23 billion, or \$3,919 per taxpayer, since my Senate colleagues and I pushed for a self-imposed cap on spending.

Local governments are saving money, too. Ongoing mandate and pension reforms are now creating savings to the tune of \$5.2 billion. Record funding for municipalities to invest in our local infrastructure and repair roads and bridges helps to defray the costs for local taxpayers. Additional savings for local governments means more relief for taxpayers.

For the past five years, 61 different tax cuts have saved taxpayers nearly \$7 billion. New property tax rebates, approved in June, will provide \$1.3 billion in real relief to homeowners next year and a total of \$3.1 billion over the next four years. New York's middle-class tax rate is at its lowest rate in 62 years. The tax rate for manufacturers is at its lowest rate since 1917.

All of these efforts, to control spending and cut taxes, are helping to strengthen our economy. The statewide unemployment rate is at a seven year low of 5.5%. In the last five years, 673,500 jobs have been created. In the past 13 months, 139,300 jobs have been created. In Western New York, 304 economic development projects are investing \$272.5 million in our region.

While tremendous progress has been made, particularly in the last five years, the challenge is to build upon this momentum in next year's session and beyond. There is still much more work to be done on many of these issues.

Over 1,000 residents attended my annual Family Health Fair earlier this month to take advantage of all the free health services and screenings available, including:

- 227 Cholesterol Screenings & Glucose Tests
- 150 Retina Scans
- 86 Prostate Cancer Screenings
- 66 Bone Density Heel Scans
- 52 Skin Cancer Screenings
- 51 Prevnar Vaccinations
- 10 Breast Cancer Screenings

Thank you to our event partners– Kaleida Health, the Amherst Senior Center, Assembly members Jane Corwin and Ray Walter– and to the 90-plus health vendors for donating their time and efforts in making this year's Health Fair a huge success!

Senator Ranzenhofer's monthly column appeared in the Amherst & Clarence Bees on August 19th.