



NEW YORK STATE SENATOR

Catharine Young

LETTER FROM SEN. YOUNG ON REFORMING ALBANY

CATHARINE YOUNG July 2, 2009



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Dear Friends,

I know you have questions about the leadership vote in the Senate, and the real reason about why it is happening.

It all comes down to one thing -- changing the direction of the state.

Upstate New York has suffered a terrible beating since radical New York City-controlled Democrats took over the Senate earlier this year. They have proven over and over that they don't care about Upstate and our people.

To give you a two-sided graphic explanation of what we are up against, I have enclosed a card with state maps that shows districts where each Senator represents -- the blue side is my Conference, and the yellow side is the Democrat conference that was in control earlier this year. You can see that the blue side represents every area of the State, while the yellow side is heavily dominated by New York City.

Since January 1, 2009 the New York City-controlled Senate Democrats, in partnership with Governor Paterson, have:

- ? Hiked taxes by an outrageous \$8.5 billion

- ? Imposed \$2,400 in new taxes and fees on our families when they already are struggling to pay their bills

- ? Eliminated your STAR rebate checks for property tax relief

- ? Piled taxes on your utility bills

- ? Loaded taxes on your health insurance premiums making health care even more unaffordable

- ? Skyrocketed spending by over \$13 billion during a recession

- ? Added more than 700 jobs to the State Senate payroll despite a multi-billion deficit facing New York
- ? Passed a state budget that was hatched in secret by three men from New York City with no public input or review
- ? Reneged on their promises for government reform
- ? Raided over \$750 million from the Power Authority that should have been used to create jobs in Western New York
- ? Hurt New York State small businesses and manufacturers by imposing new taxes and fees
- ? Changed the Empire Zone economic development program so it is less effective
- ? Put zero effort into creating jobs
- ? Refused to provide openness and transparency in the legislative process
- ? Cut over \$280 million from the SUNY system while putting a huge tax on students' tuition
- ? Refused to fund a five-year plan to fix Upstate roads and bridges but gave \$2.2 billion to bail out the New York City subway system
- ? Favored New York City over the rest of the state
- ? Pushed legislation that will put our farms out of business for good
- ? Passed a law that covers up criminal records of people who apply for jobs in schools, nursing homes, home health care agencies, day cares and banks

And that is just a partial list.

I vigorously debated against all of these awful policies on the Senate floor and voted no, but the radical, anti-Upstate agenda continued to be forced through.

I could not stand by and allow this attack on Upstate to continue, so on June 8th, I voted for a change of leadership and supported a bipartisan reform coalition to protect our taxpayers from further out-of-control spending and taxes.

My first act as a member of the new coalition was to vote for historic Senate rules reforms to increase fairness, transparency and accountability to taxpayers. The new rules take dramatic steps to end Albany's dysfunction.

Unfortunately, the New York City-controlled Democrats do not want change or reform, or to help Upstate. They have shut off the lights, locked the chamber, turned off the microphones, blocked the Senate doors with unruly ACORN groups who shoved and spat on people, refused to come to Session, altered the official Senate record of June 8 (a crime), and refused to take part in public negotiations to solve the situation. I have been shocked, disappointed and appalled at their behavior, but have participated in Session every day despite their actions.

My priority is to negotiate a solution that reforms Albany, gives equal representation to all areas of the State, and saves our people from more damaging out-of-control taxation and spending. We need the New York City-controlled Democrats to start acting like grown-ups and come to the table so we can work this out.

I am as angry and frustrated as you are with the current situation, but the basic issue remains -- the State needs to be turned around so that we have job opportunities, career paths for our young people, less suffocating taxes, and spending under control.

That's why I am standing up for my District. I believe in our people and our communities, and that we can have a bright future if the right policies are put in place.

Thank you for sharing your viewpoint with me. Please accept my best wishes and do not hesitate to let me know if I can be of further service.

Sincerely,

Catharine M. Young

Senator, 57th District