



NEW YORK STATE SENATOR

Jose Peralta

Peralta Votes No on Property Tax Cap Bill

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Full text of Senator Peralta's remarks delivered on the New York State Senate floor explaining his vote against the property tax cap bill on January 31, 2011:

"We are here today voting on a lengthy, complex piece of legislation after being given the least amount of time possible to review it and consider its impact.

My question is simply: Why?

With a \$10 billion budget gap to fill, why the emphasis on tax caps and tax cuts before even the first dime of savings has been identified?

A New York Times editorial last month, headlined The Tax Cap Illusion, noted that "history shows, painfully, that caps can do more harm than good. California's Proposition 13 led to the deterioration of universities, schools and other public facilities."

The same editorial pointed out that Massachusetts imposed a cap in 1980 "and soon police officers and firefighters were laid off and senior centers were closed. By 1991,

the State Board of Education warned of a crisis with too many classrooms simply 'warehousing' students."

And as has been pointed out over and over again by groups advocating for lower property taxes, this tax cap will not solve the problem of high property taxes or make property taxes any more affordable. And it certainly will not lower anyone's property tax bill.

So again, my question is why? Why on the eve of the release of the executive budget are we being asked to take this vote?

Whatever the answer may be, my point is this: As Democrats we must ensure that the budget is not balanced on the backs of middle and working class families and school children.

There must be shared sacrifice."