



NEW YORK STATE SENATOR

Thomas K. Duane

Working Toward an On-Time Budget

THOMAS K. DUANE March 9, 2011

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It is now less than one month before the State Budget deadline of April 1. The Senate and Assembly have just completed joint hearings on each subject matter related to the Executive Budget proposal. The next step in the process is for each house to pass a budget resolution outlining its budget priorities. Once this process is completed, Legislative Conference Committees will be convened to reconcile differences between the Senate and Assembly proposals. Finally, the Senate and Assembly will vote on an agreed upon 2011-2012 fiscal year budget before the April 1 deadline.

The Senate Republican Majority will author this year's Senate budget resolution, but I and my fellow Senate Democratic colleagues will continue to have a strong voice to speak out and fight for programs and services that are vital to New Yorkers, both on the floor of the State Senate and in the Conference Committees.

As we well know, State budgets have been notoriously late and it is possible that it could be late this year as well. However, it appears to me that it is increasing likely that an on time agreement could be reached. Governor Cuomo's use of advisory boards such as the Medicaid Redesign Team and the Mandate Relief Task Force have effectively allowed competing special interests to work together to develop solutions which have then been incorporated into the Governor's budget proposal.

While this can be a healthy and effective way to craft the State's budget, I believe it is vitally important to ask tough questions on these budget proposals. It is my role as a State Senator to make a determination of whether or not a proposed State budget is acceptable to my constituents and for those who need our help the most.

As we continue the budget process in Albany, I will continue to keep you updated and I encourage you to contact my office with any questions or concerns you may have regarding proposals in the Executive Budget or the budget process itself.