

OPINION

TOM O'MARA | 58TH DISTRICT

Taxing and spending into the future



O'Mara

Over the next several weeks, Governor Cuomo’s proposed 2020-2021 state budget will get a good going-over by the Legislature’s fiscal committees.

Legislators on both sides of the aisle will have the opportunity, in a series of 13 public hearings beginning this Monday, to question state agency heads and representatives of leading advocacy groups on the ramifications of a fiscal plan looking to spend \$178 billion. It’s a chance to assess the budget’s impact on specific programs and services, from agriculture to workforce development.

It represents a key step in the annual budget adoption process. In fact, it offers the best opportunity to air critical concerns in the light day, before the governor and legislative leaders go behind closed doors to negotiate final decisions. (For anyone interested in following along, more information and live webcasts of each public hearing can be found on the state Senate website at <https://www.nysenate.gov/2020-new-york-state-budget>.)

There’s plenty to examine. Governor Cuomo’s budget unveiling last Tuesday in Albany raised more questions than it answered – as a matter of fact, it raised many more questions than it answered about the direction this state is heading at the start of a new decade.

I sat and listened to the governor’s presentation. I listened to the governor lay the blame (wrongly, in my view) for overspending in Medicaid at the feet of local governments. I heard the governor call for a permanent ban on natural gas exploration and development in the Southern Tier or anywhere else in this state. I heard Governor

Cuomo sing the praises for the largest-ever program for this and the largest-ever program for that in the history of this state and nation – billions upon billions of dollars in spending and borrowing, most of it, by the way, heading to downstate regions.

My first response is to warn that Governor Cuomo is charting a course for the future that could leave state and local taxpayers footing an outrageous bill long, long after this governor leaves the scene.

The governor tries to put a friendly face on it, nevertheless the Cuomo budget sets the stage for significantly increasing state government spending (even with New York already facing a \$6-billion-plus deficit), adds billions of dollars to a state debt burden that is already one of the nation’s highest, and shifts costs to already overburdened local property taxpayers.

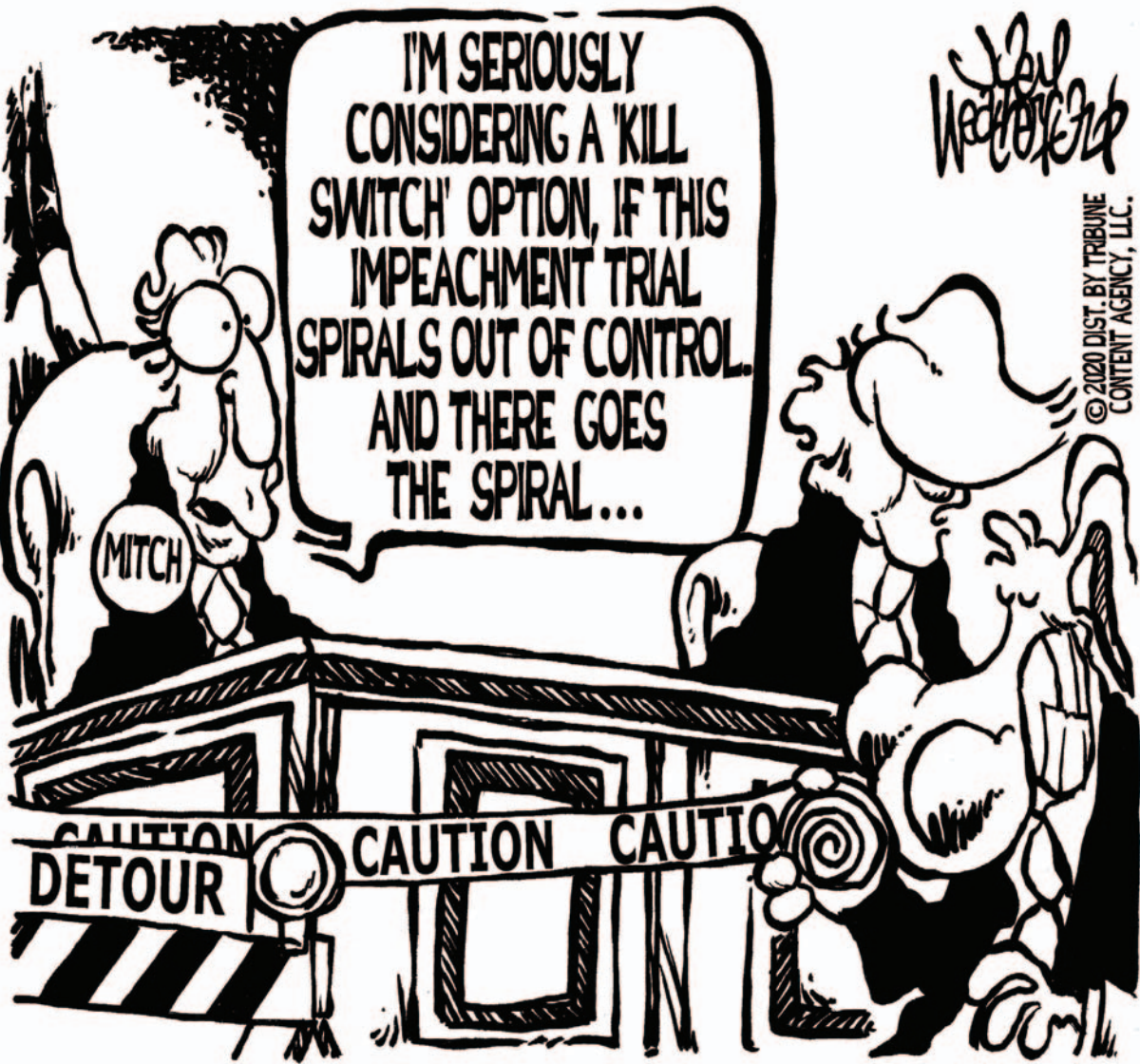
Does it make sense, when New York government already overspends and overtaxes, to call for more spending and more borrowing that everyone knows will sooner or later require higher taxes? Governor Cuomo proposes billions upon billions of dollars of short- and long-term new spending and borrowing and that’s before he even sits down to negotiate with a State Legislature under one-party, downstate control that will not hesitate to spend even more and tax even more to pay for it.

We are staring at another year of ignoring the fiscal warning signs. This state will go on failing to restore some common sense to government.

I intend to keep working with legislative colleagues across the region to keep attention focused on unfunded state mandates, job-killing state regulations, out-of-control debt, and a state tax burden that hurts family budgets and keeps New York’s business climate one of the worst in the nation.

I’ll also remind you that my 2020 “Community and Legislative Survey” is available on omara.com.

ANOTHER VIEW



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LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

Whitehouse endorses Sanders

To the Editor,
An endorsement from a losing candidate for Mayor of a small city in upstate New York, likely will not affect the primary.

But for what it is worth, I enthusiastically endorse Bernie Sanders.

He is the only candidate who has a chance of changing the trajectory that this country is on.

And, boy, does it need to be changed.

“Anyone who believes exponential growth can go on forever in a finite world is either a madman or an economist.” Kenneth E. Boulding (an English-born American economist, educator, peace activist, and interdisciplinary philosopher)

Elizabeth Whitehouse
Corning

Corning helps with global project

To the Editor,
I am writing to thank Corning residents for sharing the true meaning of Christmas with children in need this past holiday season.

Because of the generosity of donors in Corning and across the United States, Operation Christmas Child, a project of Samaritan’s Purse, collected more than 8.9 million shoebox gifts in 2019. Combined with those collected from partnering countries in 2019, the ministry is now sending 10,569,405 shoebox gifts to children worldwide.

Through shoeboxes - packed with fun toys, school supplies and hygiene items - Corning volunteers brought joy to children in need around the world. Each gift-filled shoebox is a tangible expression of God’s love, and it is often the first gift these children have ever received.

Thanks to the generosity of donors, Operation Christmas Child has collected and delivered more than 178 million gift-filled shoeboxes to children in more than 160 countries and territories since 1993.

It’s not too late for people to make a difference. Though drop-off locations serving Corning are closed until November 16-23, 2020, information about year-round volunteer opportunities can also be found at samaritanspurserg.org/occ or by calling 518-437-0690.

Thank you again to everyone who participated in this global project - many who do so year after year. These simple gifts, packed with love, send a message to children worldwide that they are loved and not forgotten.

Dana Williams
Operation Christmas Child
Boone, NC

Sweet has vision for Bath

To the Editor,
Michael Sweet has announced his candidacy to run for Bath Village Mayor.

He has served on the Village Board as Trustee for the last seven years and has been an active member of the Central Steuben Chamber of Commerce.

There has been a steady decline in the Village over the past few years with countless empty storefronts, the closure of CVS, K-Mart, Chat-a-Wyle and Corning Building Company to name the most recent. What once was a place of pride with families walking downtown with their children and visiting with other neighbors out for a stroll, is off limits because they simply do not feel safe.

Mike has a vision of returning our Village to the charm and appeal we once had, to be proactive in scouting out new businesses, to address issues such as taxes, assessments, loitering and poverty.

The Village needs to be returned back to the citizenry, we the taxpayers, to be a Village that is a destination, a welcoming and attractive Village to shop in, to chat with locals over a cup of coffee.

Mike has 20 plus years of corporate experience, is a businessman, is energetic and realistic. I believe the Village of Bath is awaiting and is ready for a new, vibrant, enthusiastic, passionate and aggressive Mayor that will do the research, put the time in, who understands the challenges and is willing from day one to go to work for this Village.

We can be that success story with the right people at the helm.

Joan Blank
Bath

Exorcising political heretics

To the Editor,
I appreciate Mr. Acomb, of “Frankly Speaking” guiding me to the rebuttal letter in the Leader.

Attention must be paid to Flo Fender, pointing out hyperbole

and emotional ranting of my Dec. 8 letter.

As a child asking my mother a word’s meaning, she repeated, “Look it up in the dictionary.” I immediately looked up hyperbole and Flo was right! Her Dec. 22 letter exhibited expertise in hyperbole and emotional ranting requiring I take heed.

Though, I will admit my hyperbole is adept and my ranting is cool and calculated, controlled emotion.

My letters are on the drawing board, refined numerous times, at least a month, choosing my words meticulously.

My comparison to Democrat leadership’s and Mainstream media’s impeachment attacks against Trump as “Holy Inquisition” and Trump being punished as a “political heretic”, inspired!

Not adhering to the dogma and orthodoxy of Washington’s “Political Norms” is deemed heretical and by their politically correct corrupt standards must be punished with malicious termination.

Too, I must thank her. Her letter masterly summarizes the multitude of specious accusations against Trump. Fastidiously following anti-Trump propaganda’s contrived attacks, not facts!

Democrat Party’s and their media’s massive hypocrisy, accuses Trump of all the crimes Hillary and they have committed. Their lust for dominating power cannot accept contrary thinking. They must stamp it out. Revenge of the swamp!

Hence, their push to destroy Trump.

Socialist Democrat inquisitors want to exorcise perceived demons, in reality “We the People”, a macabre sinister mirage hovering over the vast wasteland of their desired socialism, threatening their power grab.

I knew nothing of Flo till her letter. If attached at the hip with the Democrat Party leadership, let the chips fall where they may. Flo, thanks for igniting a spirited debate.

Honest debate is a healthy exercise in revealing truth, strengthening democracy.

Gerald J. Furnkranz
Millport

The Leader

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